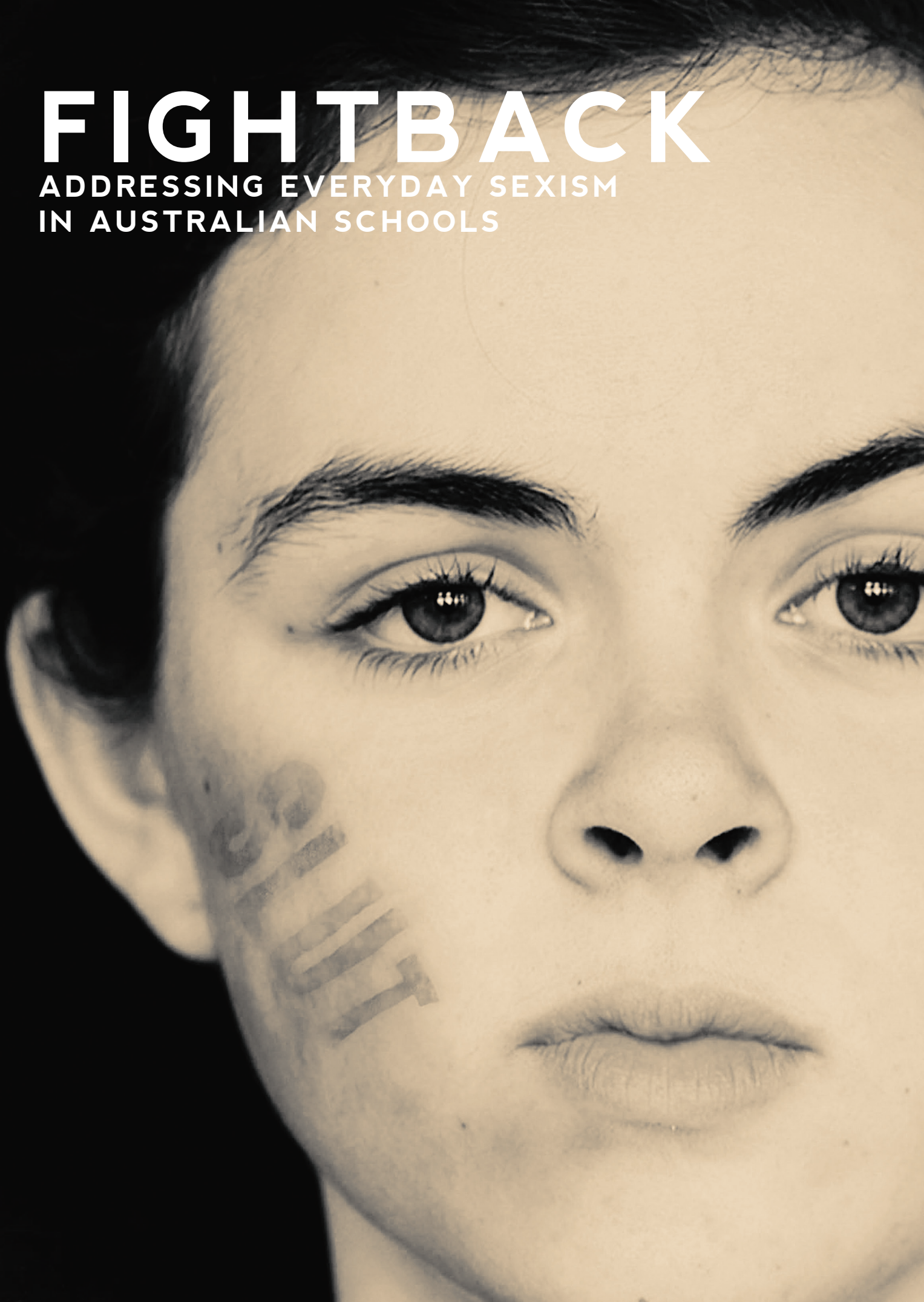


# FIGHTBACK

ADDRESSING EVERYDAY SEXISM  
IN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS



***Fight Back: Addressing Everyday Sexism in Australian Schools***

Written by Briony O'Keeffe, 2014

Informed by the Fitzroy High School Feminist Collective

[www.fhsfemco.com](http://www.fhsfemco.com)

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**FHS FEMINIST COLLECTIVE**

# INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

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What is the 'Fightback: Addressing Everyday Sexism in Australian Schools' resource?

*Fightback: Addressing Everyday Sexism in Australian Schools* is a teaching resource consisting of three units of work aimed at educating secondary school students about gender inequality, the objectification of young women's bodies and the use of sexist language. The resource also addresses the link between gender inequality and violence against women. The idea for the resource and its contents was generated by the Fitzroy High School Feminist Collective class which formed in 2013 with the intention of identifying and addressing key incidences of 'everyday sexism,' primarily those experiences that young women experience on a daily basis both within a school environment and externally to it.

Why has this resource been created?

*Fightback: Addressing Everyday Sexism in Australian Schools* aims to provide educators with accessible resources with which to address the issue of gender inequality. The resource is designed to be used as a tool to address negative attitudes towards gender equality – held by both young men and young women – that contribute to high rates of sexism and discrimination, and ultimately to high rates of violence against women in our community. As the National Community Attitudes towards Violence Against Women Survey (NCAS) notes, 'as long as we all continue to see women as less than equal to men disrespect and violence against women will continue to happen'.<sup>1</sup>

One of the most disturbing aspects of everyday sexism is the well-established connection between negative attitudes towards women and violence against women. Violence against women in Australia is increasingly acknowledged as a serious problem, with recent reports finding that more than one in three women in Australia aged over 18 have experienced violence at the hands of a man since the age of 15<sup>2</sup> and that one woman is killed by her current or former partner in Australia every week<sup>3</sup>.

Of particular concern is the NCAS's<sup>4</sup> identification of two groups - younger people of both sexes aged between 16-25 and young men – that are more likely to endorse violence-supportive attitudes. For example, one in five respondents believe a drug

or alcohol affected woman is partly to blame if she's sexually assaulted, one in five believe that men should take control in relationships. In a broader context, more than a quarter of respondents believed that men make better political leaders than women, and 49% of women reported experiencing workplace discrimination. In addition, in research undertaken in 2015 by 'Our Watch', an organisation that was established to 'drive nation-wide change in the culture, behaviours and attitudes that underpin and create violence against women and children' one in four young people surveyed did not think it was serious if a man who was normally gentle slapped his girlfriend when he was drunk, one in six respondents believed women should know their place, and one in four thought it was normal for men to pressure women into sex<sup>5</sup>.

Critically, the NCAS report also suggests that *'people with weak support for gender equality tend to be more likely to hold violence-supportive attitudes'* and that 'focusing on shifting the attitudes that support violence is key to turning the tide on violence against women in Australia'<sup>6</sup>.

How should I use the resource?

*'Fightback'* consists of three Units of work, each containing 5-10 lessons, depending on the timing of individual teachers. Though the resource has been designed to develop students' understanding of gender inequality by moving through a sequence of concepts, the units can also be taught independently of each other or out of sequence, except where otherwise recommended. The individual lessons *within* each unit can also be taught consecutively or (in most cases) independently of each other. Each lesson can be run as a 90-minute class, two 45-minute classes, or can be broken down into smaller units of time, depending on the context of the teaching environment. The resource may be integrated into existing education programs, particularly those addressing health and sexuality, personal development or life skills, but works equally well as part of an English or Studies of Society and Environment curriculum. *'Fightback'* would also work well when used in conjunction with other resources addressing similar issues, such as 'Building Respectful Relationships'<sup>7</sup> or 'Be The Hero.'<sup>8</sup>

A Note on 'Class Pages'

In some lessons reference is made to uploading materials to a 'class page'. There are many tools available to teachers who wish to create a secure online space for their classes, such as Edmodo<sup>9</sup> or GoogleDocs. However, the use of these tools is not essential and should be guided by individual preference.

Expectations for a safe & effective learning environment

Setting up a 'safe' space is essential for the delivery of this curriculum. The space should be safe in the sense that students and teachers can share their ideas and opinions and ask questions without fear of judgment or silencing; students can express their views on the issues being discussed without being stigmatised or shut down.

1 VicHealth 2014, Australians' attitudes to violence against women. Findings from the 2013 National Community Attitudes towards Violence Against Women Survey (NCAS), Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne, Australia.

2 ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) 2013, Personal Safety Survey, Australia, 2012, cat. no. 4906.0, viewed 4th December 2014, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4906.0>

3 <http://www.vicpolice.com.au/blogs/93-oursay/1302-ccp-ken-lay-on-family-violence.html>

4 See Note 1 above

5 <http://www.ourwatch.org.au/Understanding-Violence/Facts-and-figures>

6 See Note 1 above



It's likely that many of the students undertaking these units will regularly work together and have experience in developing classroom rules or agreements to ensure their learning environment is safe and that respectful behaviours such as listening and allowing no put-downs are adhered to. However, some classes may be coming together for the first time. For these classes, it is essential to establish ground rules, as they provide a structure that can improve classroom management, keep students and staff feeling safe and supported, and ensure the class works effectively. Students will be dealing with potentially sensitive issues focusing on inequality, discrimination, gendered violence, sexuality and body image, and so a structure that allows discussion of differing opinions is essential to the success of the curriculum<sup>10</sup>.

### Specific issues with boys and gender inequality<sup>11</sup>

Addressing issues of gender inequality can at times be met with a sense of resistance from students and staff who are concerned that a focus on men's and boys' privilege 'blames the boys'. Data collected from students following the trial of similar materials to those in this resource gave no indication that this was of concern to the boys themselves. It is important that boys have the opportunity to explore the construction of masculinities with regard to sexist behavior and to understand the historical and institutional nature of gender inequality. This understanding can assist in alleviating feelings of individual responsibility. The handouts on 'Reverse Sexism' and 'Violence Against Men' may also be of assistance when addressing this issue.

### Disclosure of abuse or sexual preference<sup>12</sup>

This resource includes content that may trigger a traumatic or emotional response in students, or encourage or enable students to disclose personal experiences with sexual harassment and/or sexual assault, family violence, sexuality or issues with disordered eating.

To minimise harmful disclosures, teachers need to make very clear to students prior to undertaking activities that although the activities explore personal values and attitudes around issues of gender, misogyny and violence, they do not require students to disclose their own experiences. Students may choose not to take part in activities and should be supported to manage that choice in an inconspicuous manner.

If teachers feel students may say something inappropriate, they may choose to use the strategy of protective interruption, which means interrupting students before they disclose personal information, while at the same time informing them they can talk privately with their teacher after class.

Contact details for a range of national support services have been included in the appendix of the resource: they may be photocopied and distributed to students. Educators from countries other than Australia should ensure that contact details for similar support services are provided to their students.

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7 Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood (2014), Building Respectful Relationships- Stepping Out Against gender-based violence. Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood, Melbourne. Available at <https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/content/29a93fbb-0553-4f9c-a382-c30f29afb120/BRR%20full%20document%20110614.pdf>

8 <http://www.bethehero.com.au/index.php?id=11>

9 <https://www.edmodo.com/>

10 Adapted from Building Respectful Relationships, p11. See Note 7 above

11 Adapted from Building Respectful Relationships, p11. See Note 7 above

12 Adapted from Building Respectful Relationships, p12. See Note 7 above

## Sexual preference<sup>13</sup>

As this resource covers issues around gender identity and sexuality, there is also a chance that students may disclose information or concerns they have about their own or a member of their family's sexual orientation. Specifically, teachers may find that students disclose that they or a family member are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender.

Teachers need to know how to assist these students. They should identify appropriate procedures, including the use of community resources, to help students in this situation. Where appropriate, teachers are also encouraged to arrange support for the student and for themselves from student welfare staff, such as the student welfare coordinator or the school's student support services officer. Most importantly, teachers and student welfare staff need to be aware that disclosures of sexual orientation should remain confidential unless a student is at risk of harm.

## Abuse

In Victoria, teachers are mandated to make a report to Child Protection if they form a reasonable belief that a student is in need of protection because they are at risk of harm or neglect, or if that teacher holds a reasonable belief that a student is being subjected to physical or sexual abuse. Teachers should refer to the 'Child Protection – Mandatory reporting' section of the Victorian Government Schools Policy and Advisory Guide.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Adapted from Building Respectful Relationships, p12. See Note 7 above

<sup>14</sup> Adapted from Building Respectful Relationships, p12. See Note 7 above

## Links with The Australian Curriculum: AusVels

Issues related to gender and gender inequality generally fall within the Health and Physical Education domain. However, a number of other areas of the AusVels are also addressed in this resource, particularly Health and Physical Education, Interpersonal Development, Personal Learning, Civics and Citizenship and Thinking Processes. The lessons in this resource are pitched primarily at students within **Levels 9 and 10**. Please refer to the AusVels links below for more detailed information.

### AUSVELS LINKS

Level	Domain / Dimension	Relevant aspects of the standard	Applicable Unit/Lesson
9	<b>Domain</b> Health and Physical Education  <b>Dimension</b> Health knowledge and promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge of a specific social and/or cultural influence on the development of personal identity and values</li> <li>Knowledge of the rights and responsibilities associated with the increasing independence of young people...</li> </ul>	<b>Unit 1</b> 2. Hairy Armpits: Debunking some myths about feminism 3. What about the boys? 4. "But I didn't ask for it": A lesson on privilege 5. Intersectionality  <b>Unit 2</b> 1. Understanding Objectification 4. Written on the body  <b>Unit 3</b> 3. Challenging the Gender Norm 4. Sexism Stings
9	<b>Domain</b> Interpersonal Development  <b>Dimensions</b> Building social relationships  Working in Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding of the relationship between values, beliefs and accepted social practices</li> <li>Empathy in monitoring and responding to the behaviour of others in diverse social contexts</li> <li>Use of strategies for motivating group members and working towards task completion</li> <li>Use of strategies when creating ideas and solving problems</li> <li>Engagement of all team members in group processes</li> </ul>	<b>Unit 1</b> 1. What is Gender Inequality? 2. Hairy Armpits: Debunking some myths about feminism 3. What about the boys? 4. But I didn't ask for it": A lesson on privilege 5. Intersectionality  <b>Unit 2</b> 1. Understanding Objectification 2. Subjects and Objects 3. Objectification in Practice 4. Who does it hurt? The connection between objectification and violence  <b>Unit 3</b> 1. Sticks and Stones 2. Unpacking Sexist Language 3. Challenging the Gender Norm 4. Sexism Stings 5. Fighting Back

Level	Domain / Dimension	Relevant aspects of the standard	Applicable Unit/Lesson
9	<b>Domain</b> Personal Learning  <b>Dimensions</b> The individual learner  Managing personal learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexible use of multiple learning strategies to complete a set task</li> <li>Understanding that enquiry and research may challenge their own and others' values and beliefs</li> <li>Recognition of, and respect for, a range of protocols that support learning; for example, rules of discussion in a class forum</li> <li>Persistence when challenged by conflicting information, values and views</li> <li>Self-directed time management with a focus on task requirements</li> </ul>	<b>Unit 1</b> 1. What is Gender Inequality? 2. Hairy Armpits: Debunking some myths about feminism 3. What about the boys? 4. But I didn't ask for it": A lesson on privilege 5. Intersectionality  <b>Unit 2</b> 2. Subjects and Objects  <b>Unit 3</b> 1. Sticks and Stones 2. Unpacking Sexist Language 3. Challenging the Gender Norm
9	<b>Domain</b> Thinking Processes  <b>Dimensions</b> Reasoning, processing and inquiry  Creativity  Reflection, evaluation and metacognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of information-processing skills in problem solving activities that involve many variables; for example, interpreting data to draw valid conclusions</li> <li>Synthesis of information when considering various perspectives</li> <li>Use of a range of self-selected creative thinking strategies when engaging with complex and novel ideas</li> <li>Justification of their thinking processes and tools, and analysis of changes in their thinking when reviewing information and their own ideas and beliefs</li> <li>Understanding of their own and others' viewpoints following analysis of those perspectives</li> </ul>	<b>Unit 1</b> 1. What is Gender Inequality? 2. Hair Armpits: Debunking some myths about feminism 3. What about the boys? 4. But I didn't ask for it": A lesson on privilege 5. Intersectionality  <b>Unit 2</b> 2. Subjects and Objects 3. Objectification in Practice  <b>Unit 3</b> 1. Sticks and Stones 2. Unpacking Sexist Language 3. Challenging the Gender Norm

Level	Domain / Dimension	Relevant aspects of the standard	Applicable Unit/Lesson
10	<b>Domain</b> Health and Physical Education  <b>Dimension</b> Health knowledge and promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe a range of social and cultural factors that influence the development of personal identity and values.</li> <li>Analyse the positive and negative health outcomes of a range of personal behaviours and community actions</li> </ul>	<b>Unit 1</b> 4. But I didn't ask for it": A lesson on privilege 5. Intersectionality  <b>Unit 2</b> 1. Understanding Objectification 4. Written on the body  <b>Unit 3</b> 1. Sticks and Stones 2. Unpacking Sexist Language 3. Challenging the Gender Norm 4. Sexism Stings 5. Fighting Back
10 and beyond	<b>Domain</b> Interpersonal Development  <b>Dimensions</b> Building social relationships  Working in Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe how local and global values and beliefs determine their own and others' social relationships.</li> <li>Evaluate their own behaviour in relationships, identify potential conflict and employ strategies to avoid and/or resolve it.</li> <li>Understanding of the many social influences, such as values, culture, gender and power, that may affect relationships</li> <li>Behaviour that encourages diverse groups in the community to contribute to an inclusive and harmonious environment</li> <li>Strategic leadership that promotes a socially supportive school environment; for example, peer leadership and restorative strategies such as sharing feelings about an issue or incident</li> <li>Working with the strengths of a team they achieve agreed goals within set timeframes.</li> </ul>	<b>Unit 1</b> 1. What is Gender Inequality? 2. Hairy Armpits: Debunking some myths about feminism 3. What about the boys? 4. "But I didn't ask for it": A lesson on privilege 5. Intersectionality  <b>Unit 2</b> 1. Understanding Objectification 2. Subjects and Objects 3. Objectification in Practice 4. Written on the body  <b>Unit 3</b> 1. Sticks and Stones 2. Unpacking Sexist Language 3. Challenging the Gender Norm 4. Sexism Stings 5. Fighting Back



Level	Domain / Dimension	Relevant aspects of the standard	Applicable Unit/Lesson
10 and beyond	<b>Domain</b> Civics and Citizenship  <b>Dimension</b> Community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draw on a range of resources, including the mass media to articulate and defend their own opinions about political, social and environmental issues in national and global contexts. They contest, where appropriate, the opinions of others.</li> </ul>	<b>Unit 1</b> 1. What is Gender Inequality? 2. Hairy Armpits: Debunking some myths about feminism 3. What about the boys? 4. “But I didn’t ask for it”: A lesson on privilege 5. Intersectionality  <b>Unit 3</b> 2. Unpacking Sexist Language
10	<b>Domain</b> Personal Learning  <b>Dimensions</b> The individual learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students identify the ethical frameworks that underpin their own and others’ beliefs and values. . .</li> </ul>	<b>Unit 1</b> 4. “But I didn’t ask for it”: A lesson on privilege 5. Intersectionality  <b>Unit 2</b> 1. Understanding Objectification 2. Subjects and Objects 3. Objectification in Practice  <b>Unit 3</b> 1. Sticks and Stones
10	<b>Domain</b> Thinking Processes  <b>Dimensions</b> Creativity  Reflection, evaluation and metacognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply selectively a range of creative thinking strategies to broaden their knowledge and engage with contentious, ambiguous, novel and complex ideas.</li> <li>When reviewing information and refining ideas and beliefs, students explain conscious changes that may occur in their own and others’ thinking and analyse alternative perspectives and perceptions.</li> </ul>	<b>Unit 1</b> 1. What is Gender Inequality? 2. Hairy Armpits: Debunking some myths about feminism 3. What about the boys? 4. But I didn’t ask for it”: A lesson on privilege 5. Intersectionality  <b>Unit 2</b> 1. Understanding Objectification 1. Subjects and Objects  <b>Unit 3</b> 1. Sticks and Stones 2. Unpacking Sexist Language 3. Challenging the Gender Norm 4. Sexism Stings

# INTRODUCTION TO GENDER INEQUALITY



# UNIT 1

## INTRODUCTION TO GENDER INEQUALITY

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### LESSON 1

*What is Gender Inequality?*

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### LESSON 2

*Hairy Armpits  
Debunking some Myths  
about Feminism*

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### LESSON 3

*What about boys?*

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### LESSON 4

*"But I didn't ask for it"  
A lesson on privilege*

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### LESSON 5

*Intersectionality*



# WHAT IS GENDER INEQUALITY?

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**GROUP** Individual and whole group  
**TIME** 90 minutes or 2 x 45 minutes

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will gain an understanding of the concept of gender inequality

Students will explore their own beliefs about gender inequality in an Australian context

Students will have the opportunity to think reflectively and strategically about Australian statistics relating to gender inequality

## BACKGROUND

The purpose of this lesson is to assist students to establish an understanding of the concept of gender inequality and to lay a foundation for the remainder of the lessons in Unit 1-3 of the 'Fightback' resource. Students will be given the opportunity to explore preexisting beliefs about gender equality, to consider some Australian statistics about gender inequality and to think about the ways in which inequity may be addressed.

The focus of the class should be on ensuring that students are aware that there are very real and well documented gender disparities within Australia, most of which are similarly replicated in other developed countries. In the introduction to the resource, the possibility of young men feeling targeted or defensive as a result of talking about gender inequality is raised: the 'Reverse Sexism' and 'Violence Against Men' handouts may be of use in this class if you are addressing those concerns.

## ACTIVITIES

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1. Perception check
2. Perception Reviser: I always thought...
3. Discussion

## PREPARATION & MATERIALS

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- 'Gender Inequality' Power Point Presentation: accessible via the 'Resources' tab at [www.fhsfemco.com](http://www.fhsfemco.com)
- 1 x 'Perception Reviser' handout per student
- Blu-tac or other materials for displaying Perception Reviser handouts in the classroom

### PROCEDURE

1. Inform students that in this lesson they are going to be thinking about the notion of 'gender inequality' and what that might mean in an Australian context.
2. Write the following two sentence stems on the board, or post to them to your class page<sup>1</sup>:

*A. "In Australia women and men are equal because..."*  
*B. "In Australia women and men are unequal because..."*

Ask students to spend 10 minutes thinking about both statements and writing their responses down in their books or recording them on their chosen digital device.

3. Ask a selection of students to share one comment related to Sentence A and one comment related to Sentence B with the class. Allow a brief period of discussion and questioning to occur.
4. Explain to students that they will now be presented with some facts and figures about gender inequality in an Australian context. Guide students through the 'Gender Inequality' Power Point Presentation and allow the class time to write down 2-5 facts or statistics from the presentation that surprised them or that they were previously unaware of.
5. Distribute one copy of the 'Perception Reviser' handout to each student. Ask students to reflect upon the facts or statistics that surprised them and to complete the sentences for each fact or statistic:

*'I always thought that...'*  
*'However, the facts show that...'*

6. Once completed, instruct students to display their Perception Reviser handout on the walls of the classroom and allow students time to walk around and look at each other's work.
7. Conclude the class by asking students to pick one or two of the facts or statistics that they or their peers selected and to think about the issue identified in light of the following question:

*What changes could be made to address this example of gender inequality in Australia?*



# PERCEPTION REVISER

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## PERCEPTION:

Per | cep | tion; NOUN

The way in which something is regarded, understood,  
or interpreted.

*Oxford English Dictionary*

I always thought that...

However the facts are that...

# PERCEPTION REVISER

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I always thought that...

However the facts are that...

# HAIRY ARMPITS

## DEBUNKING SOME MYTHS ABOUT FEMINISM

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**GROUP** Whole group / Table group / Paired  
**TIME** 90 minutes or 2 x 45 minutes

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be encouraged to explore their own preconceptions about the definition, practice and perception of feminism

Students will develop an understanding of the history of feminism

Students will evaluate the purpose of feminism in a contemporary setting

### BACKGROUND

This class is intended to build upon Unit One, Lesson One of the 'Fightback' resource, which introduces students to a range of statistics and patterns related to gender inequality and its disproportionate impact on women. It is strongly recommended that Lesson One be taught before Lesson Two.

In this lesson, students will examine the stereotypes associated with the concept of feminism. They will explore their own personal views on the subject as well as developing an understanding of the breadth and purpose of the feminist movement. An informed understanding of the concept of feminism will enable students to develop a more nuanced response to the content of the three units in this resource, and therefore it is recommended that this lesson be taught before proceeding with Units One and Two.

### ACTIVITIES

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1. Anatomy of a Feminist
2. Defining Feminism
3. Revisiting the Myths

### PREPARATION & MATERIALS

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- 1 x Anatomy of a Feminist handout for each pair of students
- Access to [www.fhsfemco.com](http://www.fhsfemco.com)
- Laptops/student access to Internet
- Gender Inequality Power Point Presentation (optional) available under the resources tab at [www.fhsfemco.com](http://www.fhsfemco.com)

## PROCEDURE

1. Assuming that you have completed *Unit One, Lesson One 'What is Gender Inequality?'* with your students (as recommended), ask students to remind you of some of the statistics from the previous class. E.g. wage gap, statistics around violence, representation in sport, etc. You may wish to record the statistics (or more general recollections of inequality) on the board or to recap by showing the class sections of the 'Gender Inequality' Power Point.
2. Provide each student with the *Anatomy of a Feminist* handout. In pairs, ask students to fill in the left hand side **ONLY** of the sheet, labeling the figure on the page with the physical, intellectual and emotional characteristics that they think are associated with feminism. Once students have been given sufficient time to fill in their handout, ask them to share some of the characteristics they have identified. Focus on the following questions:

*Why did you identify these particular characteristics/stereotypes?  
What evidence do you have to support these characteristics/stereotypes?*

3. Next, ask students to remain in pairs and ask them the question: '**What is feminism?**' Give students 5 minutes to brainstorm and write down their answers and then share their thoughts with the class. Write student responses on the board (or have a representative from each group post them to your class page).

Next, ask each pair to undertake 5-10 minutes of research to come up with a **formal definition** of feminism. Students may wish to consider the following questions:

*What is the purpose of feminism?  
What are the 'waves' of feminism and what sorts of rights did each wave address?  
Are there different types of feminism? Give some examples.*

4. Ask a small selection of pairs to share their definition with the class and write any key points that the pairs have in common up on the board.
5. Screen the video *This Is What A Feminist Looks Like*, available via the resources tab at [www.fhsfemco.com](http://www.fhsfemco.com). Ask students to take notes whilst watching the video, recording any interesting or key points made in the clip. You may wish to follow this with a brief discussion before moving on to the next step.

6. Instruct students to complete the second half of their 'Anatomy of a Feminist' handout, with the specific intention of revising any stereotypes they may have had about feminists at the beginning of the class. They should take the formal definitions of feminism they have created and the points made in the video into account when completing the activity. Completed handouts should be shared with the rest of the class.

The focus in the concluding section of the class should be on emphasising the role of feminism in historical and contemporary life, rather than the misconceptions and stereotypes associated with the movement. An understanding of the purpose of feminism will assist students to undertake the remaining classes in Unit One, Two and Three of this resource with a more informed understanding of the movement and its relationship to gender inequality.



# ANATOMY OF A FEMINIST



# WHAT ABOUT BOYS?

**GROUP TIME** Small group / Whole group / Individual  
90 minutes or 2 x 45 minutes

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to identify the difference between gender stereotyping and institutional or systemic discrimination

Students will develop a basic understanding of the concept of privilege in the context of gender inequality

## BACKGROUND

The purpose of this lesson is to address gender inequality as it relates to young men, and to explore the difference between experiencing gender stereotyping and experiencing systemic gender discrimination. The lesson introduces students to the concept of 'privilege' and prompts learners to move beyond notions of 'blame' or feelings of defensiveness towards a more thoughtful and critical understanding of gender inequality. The 'Gender Inequality' Power Point Presentation from Unit One, Lesson One may be helpful here.

## ACTIVITIES

1. Group Brainstorm
2. The Gender Continuum
3. Discussion

## PREPARATION & MATERIALS

- 1 x set of 'Gender Continuum' Character Cards
- 1 x set of 'Gender Continuum' Statements
- 1 x A3 paper per group (or you may prefer students to write in their books)
- 1 x 'Stereotypes vs. The System' handout per student + 1 x teacher copy

## PROCEDURE

## PART 1: QUICK BRAINSTORM

1. Arrange students in small groups of 3-4 and write the question 'How does Sexism affect boys?' up on the board. Ask students to discuss the question in their groups and to record their thoughts and ideas in their books. Ask a representative from each group to provide one response to the question and write their response up on the board. Conduct a brief discussion of the key points raised (they will be returned to later in the lesson).

## PART 2: THE GENDER CONTINUUM

2. Inform students that they will be participating in an activity that will require them to answer a set of questions from the point of view of a character they will be assigned. They will not know much about each character and so must respond to the activity guided by their assumptions. Distribute one 'character card' to each student and ask them to keep the identity of their character to themselves. You will have to 'double up' character cards as there are not enough for each student; this will enable discussion about individual differences in response to the 'Gender Continuum' Statements.
3. Arrange students in a line along the longest wall of the classroom. Ask students to take a moment to think about **their character**. Explain that for each question their character answers 'yes' to they will take a step forward. For each question they answer no to, they will remain where they are.

If students answer 'yes' to one question and then 'no' to the next they **do not move backwards**, but remain in place.

Encourage students to focus on the element of their character that is relevant to the question asked. E.g. will a character's job or age affect their answer or is it irrelevant in the context of the question?

4. Read out the 'Gender Continuum' Statements one by one and ask students to move forwards **if they think their character** would answer 'yes' to the statement or to remain where they are if their character would answer 'no'. They should answer thinking about the most likely scenario, not thinking about how things 'should be'.
5. Once all of the statements have been read ask students to reveal their character to the rest of the class. Begin by focusing on the students who are right at the 'front' of the room and students who are right at the 'back,' so as to begin to highlight the differences in **privilege**<sup>1</sup> between the groups. Then allow each student from front to back to reveal her or his character. Compare placement for students who have been given the same character.

## UNIT 1 / LESSON 3

### USEFUL VOCABULARY: PRIVILEGE<sup>2</sup>

Privilege is the notion that some groups of people have advantages relative to other groups, even when they don't choose to have those advantages. Rather than being something that is earned, privilege is something that is awarded to a person based on characteristics they are assigned at birth, such as cultural identity and class. The term is commonly used to describe a lack of social equality, particularly with regards to race, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability and social class.

For example, by being born white in Australia you have advantages – privileges – that are not necessarily assigned to those who are seen to be 'non-white'. By being born male you have advantages – equitable pay for example – that you may not approve of or think you are entitled to, but that you gain anyway because of your status as male.

Privilege can also be financial or material, for example access to housing, education, and jobs, as well as emotional or psychological, such as a sense of personal safety, or having a sense of belonging or worth in society.

6. Facilitate a discussion with the class about how each character ended up at the front or back of the room, as well as those characters that ended up in the middle. The focus should be on encouraging students to think about how the gender of their character has affected their decision to move forwards or to remain in place.

Those 'characters' that have moved forwards the most frequently represent those in our community who experience the most privilege. Those who have remained in their original position most frequently represent those in our community who experience the most discrimination on the basis of their gender, and potentially on the basis of their race, religion or sexuality as well. It should become clear that although young men are subject to gender stereotyping, they are much less likely to encounter systemic gender discrimination.

### PART 3: STEREOTYPES AND SYSTEMS

1. Inform students that this final part of the class is intended to help them differentiate between the impact of gender stereotyping and systemic gender discrimination, following on from the Gender Continuum activity.

Read out the definition of Systemic Sexism and Sexist Stereotypes from the 'Stereotypes vs. The System' handout. Ask students to think about both the brainstorm that opened the class and the Gender Continuum activity whilst participating in a group discussion. The following questions may be used as prompts:

- What are some examples of gender stereotyping?
- What are some examples of systemic gender discrimination?
- What are the differences between gender stereotyping and systemic gender discrimination?
- Who experiences gender stereotyping?
- Who experiences systemic gender discrimination?

#### **It is important that the focus of the discussion be twofold:**

Acknowledging the sexist stereotypes that are applied to boys, and the impact those stereotypes have on boys' self-esteem and their ability to step outside 'mainstream' ideas of masculinity.

Acknowledging the difference between sexist stereotypes – which apply to both girls and boys - and a system or set of practices that systematically discriminates against girls and women.

1 Refer to 'Useful Vocabulary: Privilege' on page 23  
2 Twine, France Winddance (2013). *Geographies of Privilege*. Routledge. pp. 8–10  
Kimmel, Michael S. (2009). *Privilege: A Reader*. Westview Press. pp 1, 5, 13–26  
Whitley, B. and Kite, M. (2009). *The psychology of prejudice and discrimination*. 2nd ed. Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning.

# STEREOTYPES VS. 'THE SYSTEM'

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## STEREOTYPES

**Gender stereotypes** are simplistic generalisations about the gender attributes, differences, and roles of individuals and/or groups. Stereotypes can be positive or negative, but they rarely communicate accurate information about others. When people automatically apply gender assumptions to others regardless of evidence to the contrary, they are reinforcing gender stereotyping.

Some examples might be:

- Making statements like '*boys don't cry*' or '*act like a man*' or '*stop behaving like a girl*' to indicate to young men that they are not being '*masculine*' enough
- Marketing pink dolls exclusively to girls and blue tractors exclusively to boys from a very early age
- Assuming that boys and men do not like craft and cooking but prefer cars and sport
- Assuming that girls and women don't like or aren't good at Maths and Science
- Featuring women almost exclusively in cleaning product advertisements, suggesting that cleaning is a woman's role whilst men are incompetent or lazy

## THE SYSTEM

The word 'systemic' refers to something that is spread system-wide rather than being merely individual, affecting a group of people or a system (such as a society) as a whole.

Systemic sexism, also called institutional sexism, is the tendency of a system to support outcomes that favour one sex over the other, or to restrict the opportunities for one sex as compared with the other sex, with women and girls most often adversely affected.

Systemic sexism is often a product of history because it involves patterns in social groups that have evolved over decades and centuries. These patterns may seem 'invisible' to us, especially if we have not experienced their effects personally.

Some examples of systemic sexism might be:

- Companies routinely employing male graduates at a higher rate of pay than female graduates who have the same degree and the same results (in Australia there is still an 18% pay gap between men and women)
- The legal system formalising a man's right to rape his wife (legal in Victoria until 1985)
- The historical omission of girls and women from daily speech. E.g. Through the use of phrases like 'mankind', despite females making up more than 50% of the population of many countries around the world, including Australia

This systemic sexism is what the term 'patriarchy' refers to. Patriarchy basically refers to a system that places power in the control of men. 'Patriarchy' does not refer to a male conspiracy to seize power, but to a society that privileges men.

## UNIT 1 / LESSON 3

### GENDER CONTINUUM CHARACTER CARDS

**A MALE CEO OF A MULTINATIONAL  
COMPANY**

**A 15 YEAR OLD FEMALE STUDENT**

**A 15 YEAR OLD MALE STUDENT**

**A STAY-AT-HOME MUM**

**A WOMAN WHO IDENTIFIES AS  
MUSLIM**

**A FEMALE CEO OF A  
MULTINATIONAL COMPANY**

**A YOUNG MAN WHO HAS 'COME  
OUT' AS BEING GAY TO FRIENDS  
AND FAMILY**

**A MARRIED MAN IN HIS 30s**

**A STAY-AT-HOME DAD**

**A YOUNG MAN WHO IDENTIFIES AS  
'TRANSGENDER'**

## UNIT 1 / LESSON 3

### GENDER CONTINUUM CHARACTER CARDS

**A MARRIED WOMAN IN HER 30s**

**A YOUNG WOMAN WHO HAS 'COME  
OUT' AS BEING GAY TO FRIENDS  
AND FAMILY**

**A WOMAN WHO IDENTIFIES AS A  
FEMINIST**

**A YOUNG ABORIGINAL MAN**

**A 65 YEAR OLD WHITE WOMAN**

**A 65 YEAR OLD WHITE MAN**

**A YOUNG ABORIGINAL WOMAN**

**A MAN WHO IDENTIFIES AS A  
FEMINIST**

**A FEMALE LAWYER**

**A YOUNG MAN IN A WHEELCHAIR**



## UNIT 1 / LESSON 3

# THE GENDER CONTINUUM QUESTIONS

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1. I feel safe walking or travelling alone at night
2. I would feel comfortable going topless at the beach
3. People of my sex are equally represented in the parties that make up the Australian government
4. Many people of the same sex as me are CEO's (Chief Executive Officers) of large companies or corporations
5. It would be easy for me to become an AFL umpire
6. It's unlikely that I will lose money throughout my career by having/wanting time off to look after children
7. I won't be told that I am bossy or aggressive if I am assertive and confident in my job or at school
8. I often see people of the same sex as me playing sport during prime time television coverage
9. When I ask to see the person 'in charge' at a company, odds are that I will see someone of the same sex as me
10. If I'm careless with my driving it won't be attributed to my sex
11. Theoretically, I could sleep with as many people as I want to without the risk of being called a 'slut'
12. I can wear a piece of clothing that exposes my chest without being seen as 'sending out a message' about my sexual availability
13. I routinely remove the hair from my body (especially from my underarms, legs, eyebrows, and groin) because I don't want to risk being told I'm 'gross'
14. I risk being labeled a 'bitch' if I am loud or opinionated in class
15. I can feel confident that the ordinary language of day-to-day existence will always include my sex. E.g. "Mankind", "All Men Are Created Equal", "Chairman", "Postman" etc.
16. If I am able to be married, it is generally accepted that I will keep my own name
17. The decision to hire me for a job will not be based on assumptions about whether or not I intend to have a family sometime soon
18. I am under pressure to look fit and muscular
19. I am under pressure to look thin and toned
20. I will usually receive the same amount of pay for the job I do as a person of the opposite sex
21. A person of my sex is likely to be a victim of violence perpetrated by someone of the opposite sex
22. A person of my sex is likely to be a victim of violence perpetrated by someone of the same sex

# “BUT I DIDN’T ASK FOR IT”

## A LESSON ON PRIVILEGE

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**GROUP  
TIME**

Whole group / Individual  
90 minutes or 2 x 45 minutes

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will develop  
a more complex under-  
standing of the notion of  
privilege

Students will explore  
their own relationship to  
the notion of privilege

Students will make  
connections between the  
notion of privilege and  
the practice of sexism or  
gender inequality

### BACKGROUND

This lesson is intended to assist students to develop a more in depth understanding of the concept of privilege, which was briefly introduced in Unit One, Lesson Three. An understanding of the concept of privilege will help students to get the most out of all three units in the resource.

### ACTIVITIES

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1. Privilege B-Ball
2. Privilege Diagram
3. Discussion

### PREPARATION & MATERIALS

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- Classroom bin without lid
- 1 x piece of scrap paper of differing weights (e.g. One A4 piece of paper, half a piece of A4, a small piece of tissue paper etc.) per student
- Colour pens or pencils
- *Gender Equality* Power Point Presentation available via the resources tab at [www.fhsemco.com](http://www.fhsemco.com)
- *Stereotypes vs. The System* handout
- Arrange the seats in your classroom so that they are in rows, or so that some students are closer to the bin than others

## UNIT 1 / LESSON 4

### USEFUL VOCABULARY: PRIVILEGE

Privilege is the notion that some groups of people have advantages relative to other groups, even when they don't **choose** to have those advantages. Rather than being something that is earned, privilege is something that is awarded to a person based on characteristics they are assigned at birth, such as cultural identity and class.

The term is commonly used to describe a lack of social equity, particularly with regards to a lack of privilege associated with race, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability or social class.

For example, by being born white in Australia you have advantages – privileges – that are not necessarily assigned to those who are seen to be 'non-white'. By being born male you have advantages – equitable pay for example – that you may not approve of or think you are entitled to, but that you gain anyway because of your status as male.

Privilege can also be financial or material, for example access to housing, education, and jobs, as well as emotional or psychological, such as a sense of personal safety, or having a sense of belonging or worth in society.

### PROCEDURE

#### PART 1: PRIVILEGE B-BALL<sup>1</sup>

1. Make sure that there is a bin at the front of the room (a small waste paper basket is fine) and that the students in the classroom **are all located at different distances from the bin**.

Having some students closer to the bin, some further away and perhaps some on a difficult angle in relation to it, **is a critical component of this activity**. Distribute a heavier piece of paper to each student nearer the front of the room, a lighter piece to those in the back and a random selection for the remainder of students. Ask them to crumple their pieces of paper up. **Do not allow students to move places or to choose their own position in the room as this will undermine the effectiveness of the activity.**

2. Tell students that they are going to play simple game. Inform them that together they represent the Australian population and that 'everyone in Australia has the chance to become the CEO of a large corporation and to become wealthy and successful, if they want to'. To become wealthy and successful, all they have to do is to get their piece of paper into the bin, whilst remaining fully seated.
3. Allow students to take their shots at the bin, either one at a time or a couple of students at a time, depending on class dynamics.

At this point you should expect to see those students at the front of the room with heavier paper having more success at getting their paper into the bin. You may hear students at the back or on the sides complaining that the set up of the room is 'unfair' because the students in the front row or those who are closer to the bin stand a much better chance of getting their paper in. This is compounded by the fact their paper is heavier and therefore easier to throw. You should also expect a couple of students at the back of the room, or in a difficult position, to manage to get their paper into the bin.

4. Give students a chance to provide some quick feedback about why the set up of the room may have advantaged some students and disadvantaged others.
5. Explain to students that being closer to the bin with a heavier piece of paper is symbolic of having more **privilege** than other students in the class. Having more opportunity given to you, **despite not choosing that opportunity**, is what privilege looks like.
6. The focus of the debriefing should be that privilege is not something we 'choose' to possess but that we may gain advantage from being in a privileged position regardless, and vice versa. We can't 'get rid' of our privilege: it is systematically entrenched in the culture we are born into.

**Debrief by asking students the following questions:**

*Did you notice that those people who were at the back of the room or on a difficult angle to the bin were more likely to identify the unfairness of the activity? Why?*

*Is it the fault of students who were at the front of the room that they were closer to the bin? Did they have an advantage nonetheless?*

*Is it the fault of the students at the back of the room that they were less close to the bin? Were they disadvantaged nonetheless?*

It is also quite common for those with privilege not to notice that they are 'closer to the bin' than other people: they don't ask to be closer to the bin, but they are closer to it nonetheless, because of the circumstances of their lives.

The next activity will focus on asking students to identify what some of those circumstances might be.

## PART 2: DRAWING OUT THE SITES OF PRIVILEGE

1. Ask students to draw a simple pen or grey-lead pencil diagram of the room, indicating where each chair/student was located in the room and in relation to the bin, as well as any other relevant features of the room, such as an obstruction between a student and the bin, being located underneath a fan etc. Do not allow too much time for this activity: the drawing doesn't need to be complex.
2. Request that students colour code the seats in their diagram by allocating those seats/students closest to the bin one colour and those that were further away a second colour. The colours should correspond to how easy/difficult it was for the paper to be thrown into the bin from that location. E.g. blue for those at the front, red for those at the back. Students may also wish to differentiate further by allocating separate colours for less clear-cut seats (for example a seat in the middle or near the front but on an angle to the side), which indicate the level of difficulty associated with getting the paper into the bin from that position.

3. Ask students to consider how a seat's proximity to or distance from the bin could symbolise some of the real life privileges or disadvantages people in Australia might face. What sorts of characteristics could enable someone to be 'closer to the front' and therefore more likely to succeed?

Would those closer to the front necessarily be aware of those advantageous characteristics?

Characteristics might include: race, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, social class or education.

***Discuss as a class and then ask students to:***

***Label the seats in their diagram that are at the front of the room/within easy shot of the bin with the real-life privileges that correspond to having an 'easy shot'***

***Label the seats in their diagram that are at the back of the room/on a difficult angle to the bin with the real-life disadvantages that correspond to having an 'difficult shot'***

***Some seats/students might have both a privilege and a disadvantage, for example, a person who is closer to the front of the room than the back, but who has a lighter piece of paper. This could symbolise, for example, a man who is living with a disability, or a woman with access to further education.***

### PART III: RE-FOCUS ON GENDER

1. Conclude the class by discussing the following questions:
  - In what ways could simply being born female or male place you 'towards the front or the back of the room'?
  - In what way might feeling conflicted about which sex or gender you belong to place you towards the front or the back of the room?
  - What factors other than gender might affect whether you might be located at the front or back of the room?

During the discussion it may be useful to revisit or to have on hand the statistics introduced in the 'Gender Inequality' Power Point Presentation from Unit One,

Lesson One.. It may also be useful to remind students of the systemic nature of gender inequality, outlined in the ‘Stereotypes vs. The System’ handout in Unit One, Lesson Three.

2. Ensure that students are required to think critically and deeply about whether a characteristic/social construct is ultimately an advantage or a disadvantage to women or men in terms of wealth, safety or social advantage.

The following terms/examples might assist with this process.

**Prejudice** is an irrational feeling of dislike for a person or group of persons, usually based on stereotype. Virtually everyone feels some sort of prejudice: prejudice is a feeling, a belief. You can be prejudiced, but still be a fair person if you’re careful not to act on your irrational dislike.

**Discrimination** takes place when a person acts on prejudice. This describes those moments when one individual decides not to give another individual a job because of, say, their gender. You can discriminate, individually, against any person or group, if you’re in a position of power over the person you want to discriminate against. Men can discriminate against women, and women can discriminate against men if, for example, one is the interviewer and the other is the person being interviewed.

**Sexism**, however, describes patterns of discrimination that are institutionalised as “normal” throughout an entire culture, for example not paying women the same as men. It’s based on an ideological belief that one “sex” is somehow better than another “sex”. It’s not one person discriminating at this point, but a whole population operating in a **social structure** that actually makes it **difficult** for a person **not** to discriminate.

1 Activity adapted from:  
<http://www.buzzfeed.com/nathanwpyle/this-teacher-taught-his-class-a-powerful-lesson-about-privil#ojrrJypxg>

# INTERSECTIONALITY

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**GROUP TIME** Whole group / Individual  
90 minutes or 2 x 45 minutes

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will gain an understanding of the concept of 'intersectionality'

Students will explore their own relationship to privilege and intersectionality

Students will reflect upon the possibility of a simultaneous experience of privilege and disadvantage

Students will be encouraged to think critically about how intersectionality works in terms of gender inequality

## BACKGROUND

This class is intended to introduce students to the concept of intersectionality, and to encourage them to explore the ways in which individuals experience discrimination. It can be taught as a stand-alone lesson, but works well as a final building block in terms of fostering an understanding of gender inequality and its connection with broader forms of marginalisation.

## ACTIVITIES

1. Active Intersections
2. Crossroads Crossword

## PREPARATION & MATERIALS

- 1 x Intersection Character card' per student
- 1 x teacher copy of 'Active Intersections' instruction sheet (to be read beforehand and in class)
- 1 x 'Crossroad' Crossword per student
- 1 x 'Intersectionality: the basics' per student

## PROCEDURE

### PART 1: ACTIVE INSTRUCTIONS

1. Ask students to arrange their seats so that they are sitting in one big circle. Give each student an 'Intersections Character card' and ask them not to show it to anyone else. Make sure that students have read the details on their card carefully, but let them know that they may check the details if they need to as the activity progresses.
2. Explain to students that they will be responding to the characteristics written on their card with a physical action, so they will need to pay close attention to the instructions when they are read out.
3. Read the 'Active Intersections' instruction sheet to students.
4. After you have read through all of the instructions, stop and reflect on the activity. Ask students to identify what was difficult about the task, focusing on the issue of having to perform multiple actions at once, as compared to only having to perform one action.

**Ask students the following questions:**

*Which students/characters were required to perform several actions at once?*

*Which students/characters did not have to perform any actions?*

*What might those physical actions symbolise?*

*If each physical action represents a characteristic that is related to discrimination (e.g. Disability, race) what might it be like having to deal with more than one of those characteristics at a time in day-to-day life*

### PART 2: CROSSROADS CROSSWORD

1. Give each student a copy of the 'Crossroads' crossword. The terms in the crossword have deliberately been kept simple and the clues provided are generous so that only a small amount of time needs to be spent on the solving of the crossword. Allow students a maximum of 10 minutes to complete the activity.



## UNIT 1 / LESSON 5

### USEFUL VOCABULARY: INTERSECTIONALITY

The key part of the term Intersectionality is 'intersection'

The term **Intersectionality** was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, in response to the Second Wave feminist movement, which was regarded as focusing almost exclusively on the way in which gender discrimination affected white women.

Crenshaw argued that Second Wave feminism did not recognise that black women were **simultaneously** experiencing discrimination on the basis of their gender **and** their race.

She said that the experience of being a black woman could not be understood simply in terms of being black, or of being a woman, but must be understood instead in terms of the interactions between these two identities or the way in which they **intersected**, enabling discrimination on the basis of **two characteristics at the same time**.

In contemporary use, the term is applied to all of those in the community who experience discrimination via multiple sites (such as gender, race, class, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, education and class).

### PROCEDUREcont.

2. Ask students to note that each of the words in the crossword intersects. That is, the letter 'e' in 'race' connects to the letter 'e' in 'sexuality', the letter 'n' in 'religion' connects to the letter 'n' in 'gender' etc

3. Write the term 'Intersectionality' up on the board.

Ask students to think about what the word 'intersection' means and to share their ideas with the class.

Try to elicit responses that point to the 'meeting' or splicing together of two or more different points. The most likely example that students will give and the clearest example you can provide is that of roads intersecting.

4. Next, ask students to think about both the physical activity they participated in in Part 1 of the lesson and the crossword they have just completed (focus on the crossword if you have not completed Part 1).

#### **Ask students:**

*In what way did the different characteristics in the 'Active Intersections' game or the crossword intersect?*

5. Give each student a copy of 'Intersectionality: the basics' and read through it with the class.

**Draw a connection** between the physical actions each student had to perform in Part 1 of the class, the intersections of the words in the crossword **and the concept of intersectionality** (use only the crossword if applicable).

As a class, reflect on the way in which particular groups of people experience **intersectional discrimination** on the basis of their identity or on the basis of social constructs that are applied to them.

Also ensure that students understand that one person can experience both privilege (a concept that is explored in Unit 1, Lesson 4) and discrimination simultaneously. E.g. A white male CEO who also lives with a disability.

## UNIT 1 / LESSON 5

### INTERSECTIONALITY CHARACTER CARDS

**I AM...  
A WHITE MAN WHO IDENTIFIES AS  
A HETEROSEXUAL**

**I AM...  
A WHITE WOMAN WHO IDENTIFIES  
AS HETEROSEXUAL**

**I AM...  
AN INDIGENOUS WOMAN WHO  
IDENTIFIES AS HETEROSEXUAL**

**I AM...  
AN INDIGENOUS MAN WHO  
IDENTIFIES AS HETEROSEXUAL**

**I AM...  
A WHITE WOMAN WHO HAS A  
DISABILITY AND IDENTIFIES AS  
HETEROSEXUAL**

**I AM...  
A SUDANESE WOMAN WHO HAS  
A DISABILITY AND IDENTIFIES  
AS HETEROSEXUAL**

**I AM...  
A WHITE MAN WHO IDENTIFIES  
AS GAY**

**I AM...  
AN INDIAN MAN WHO IDENTIFIES  
AS GAY**

**I AM...  
AN INDIGENOUS WOMAN WHO  
IDENTIFIES AS GAY**

**I AM...  
A WHITE WOMAN WHO IDENTIFIES  
AS GAY**

## UNIT 1 / LESSON 5

### INTERSECTIONALITY CHARACTER CARDS

**I AM...**

**A WHITE WOMAN WHO HAS A  
DISABILITY AND IDENTIFIES  
AS GAY**

**I AM...**

**A MUSLIM WOMAN WHO HAS A  
DISABILITY AND IDENTIFIES  
AS GAY**

**I AM...**

**A WHITE WOMAN WHO USES A  
WHEELCHAIR AND IDENTIFIES  
AS HETEROSEXUAL**

**I AM...**

**A WHITE MAN WHO USES A  
WHEELCHAIR AND IDENTIFIES AS  
HETEROSEXUAL**

**I AM...**

**A WHITE MAN WHO IDENTIFIES  
AS TRANSGENDER**

**I AM...**

**AN INIGENOUS WOMAN WHO  
IDENTIFIES AS TRANSGENDER**

**I AM...**

**A WORKING CLASS WOMAN WHO  
USES A WHEELCHAIR AND  
IDENTIFIES AS TRANSGENDER**

**I AM...**

**A WHITE WOMAN WHO HAS  
VISION IMPAIRMENT AND  
IDENTIFIES AS GAY**

**I AM...**

**A WHITE, WORKING CLASS MAN  
WHO IDENTIFIES AS GAY**

**I AM...**

**A MIDDLE CLASS CHINESE MAN  
WHO IDENTIFIES AS GAY**

## UNIT 1 / LESSON 5

### INTERSECTIONALITY CHARACTER CARDS

**I AM...**

**A MIDDLE CLASS, WHITE MALE  
POLITICIAN WHO IDENTIFIES AS  
HETEROSEXUAL**

**I AM...**

**A WHITE FEMALE TEACHER WHO  
IDENTIFIES AS GAY**

**I AM...**

**A WHITE MAN WHO IDENTIFIES  
AS HETEROSEXUAL.  
I LEFT SCHOOL IN YEAR 8**

**I AM...**

**A TEENAGE GIRL WHO IDENTIFIES  
AS GAY. I RECENTLY LEFT SCHOOL  
IN YEAR 9**

**I AM...**

**A WHITE WOMAN WITH A  
UNIVERSITY DEGREE WHO  
IDENTIFIES AS HETEROSEXUAL**

**I AM...**

**AN INDIGENOUS WOMAN WITH A  
UNIVERSITY DEGREE WHO  
IDENTIFIES AS HETEROSEXUAL**

**I AM...**

**A CHINESE WOMAN WITH A  
UNIVERSITY DEGREE, WHO USES  
A WHEELCHAIR AND IDENTIFIES  
AS HETEROSEXUAL**

**I AM...**

**A WHITE MAN WITH A UNIVERSITY  
DEGREE, WHO USES A WHEELCHAIR  
AND IDENTIFIES AS HETEROSEXUAL**

**I AM...**

**A WORKING CLASS INDIGENOUS  
WOMAN, WHO HAS A HEARING  
IMPAIRMENT AND IDENTIFIES  
AS BI-SEXUAL**

**I AM...**

**A WORKING CLASS WHITE MAAN  
WHO HAS A HEARING IMPAIRMENT  
AND IDENTIFIES AS BI-SEXUAL**

**UNIT 1 / LESSON 5**

**INTERSECTIONALITY CHARACTER CARDS**

**I AM...**

**A WHITE MALE DOCTOR WHO  
IDENTIFIES AS HETEROSEXUAL**

**I AM...**

**A WHITE FEMALE DOCTOR WHO  
IDENTIFIES AS HETEROSEXUAL**

## ACTIVE INTERSECTIONS ACTIVITY

INSTRUCTION SHEET<sup>1</sup>

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Before beginning this activity, please ensure that you are aware of any students in your classroom that may not be able to perform the physical actions described in this activity. Ensure that you provide appropriate alternatives for those students, allowing assistance from an aide where appropriate.

**Context**

*The purpose of this activity is to assist students to understand the idea of intersectionality by assigning a separate physical action to a variety of characteristics that are associated with discrimination.*

*For example, the action of stamping is assigned to discrimination on the basis of gender; the action of nodding the head from side to side is assigned to discrimination on the basis of race.*

*It is up to individual teachers to decide whether they would like to discuss the aim of the activity before commencing, but it works well to simply allow a class to become engaged in the activity, making connections with the concept of intersectionality during the discussion that follows.*

## NOTE TO TEACHERS

As you read out each instruction, ensure that you allocate a small amount of 'practice' time to students who have multiple actions to perform.

**Read the following instructions to Students**

1. You have all been given a card with a 'character' written on it.
2. Each character has a number of defining characteristics that you should make sure you are familiar with. Please take a moment to read your card, but do not show it to anyone else.
3. I am going to read out a number of statements that have a physical or vocal 'action' associated with them, for example, stamping your feet.

If your character possesses the characteristic that I read out, then you must perform the action associated with that characteristic. For example, I might tell you to stamp your feet if you are a woman. **It is important that you do not perform the action if your character does not have the characteristic I read out.**

4. If your character has more than one of the characteristics I read out, then you should be doing more than one action at the same time. This might be difficult but it is important to give it a shot!

### ACTIVITY cont.

#### STATEMENTS

1. If your character is female, stamp both of your feet. I will allow you a minute or two to get into the rhythm of stamping.
2. If your character has a disability, such as being in a wheelchair or being visually impaired, clap your hands. Remember, if your character is female and has a disability, you should now be stamping your feet and clapping your hands at the same time.
3. If your character belongs to a race or a religion that **routinely experiences** discrimination, shake your head from side to side repeatedly. N.B. Much research undertaken into racism in Australia shows that members of the Australian community who are seen as 'white' do not generally experience **routine discrimination**.
4. If your character identifies as gay, bisexual or transgender, say 'OK' (out loud) every 3 seconds.
5. If your character is working class or left school early, shrug your shoulders up and down.
6. When I look around, I should see a variety of physical activities going on: some of you may be doing nothing, but some may be stamping, clapping, shaking heads, saying 'OK' and shrugging at the same time!

#### DISCUSSION

After you have read through all of the instructions, stop and reflect on the activity. Ask students to identify what was difficult about the task, focusing on the issue of having to perform multiple actions at once, as compared to only having to perform one action.

**Ask students the following questions:**

*Which students/characters were required to perform several actions at once?*

*Which students/characters did not have to perform any actions?*

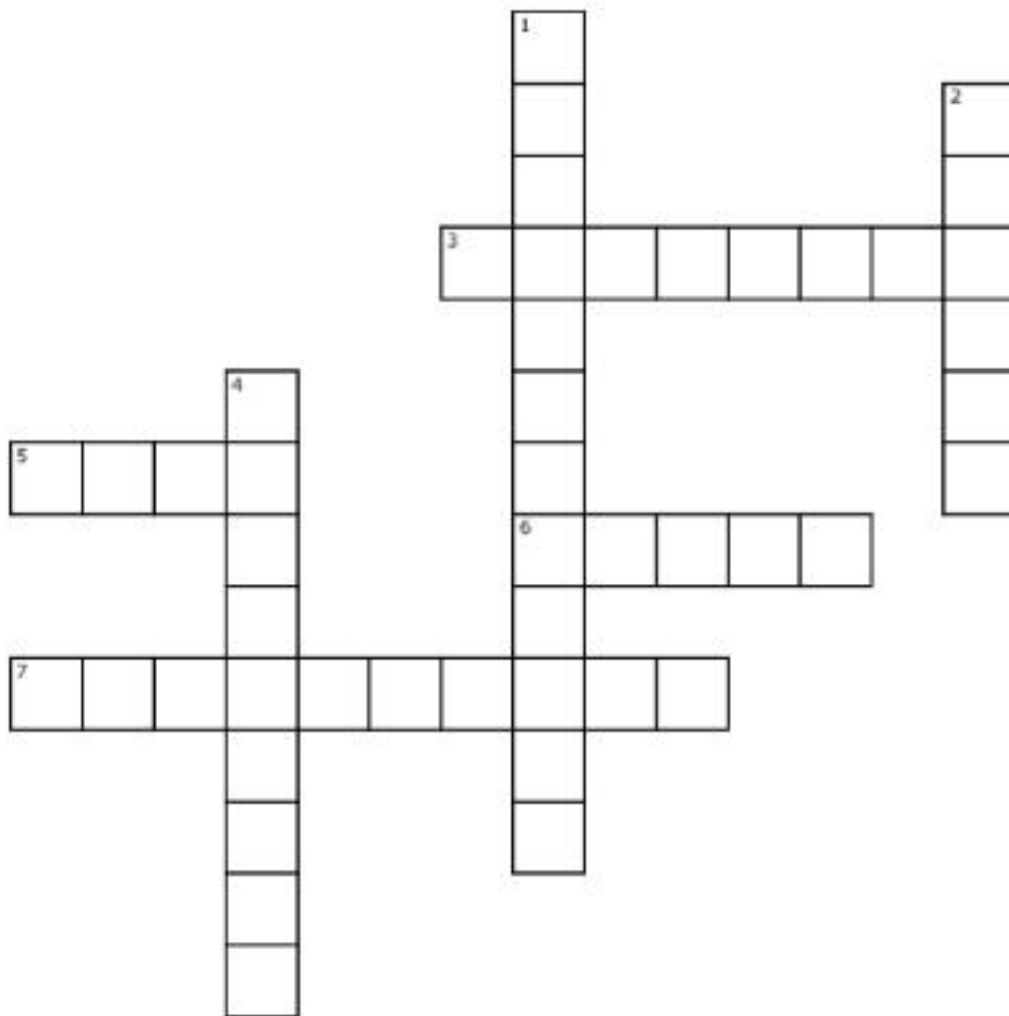
*What might those physical actions symbolise?*

*If each physical action represents a characteristic that is related to discrimination (e.g. Disability, race) what might it be like having to deal with more than one of those characteristics at a time in day-to-day life?*

# 'CROSSROADS'

## INTERSECTIONALITY

---



### ACROSS

- 3. A specific set of beliefs and practices. For example, Islam, Christianity or Buddhism.
- 5. A way of classifying people based on physical characteristics, such as skin colour. This word is also used to describe competing with another person in order to come first.
- 6. Working, middle and upper are all words used to describe this social structure.
- 7. A word used to describe a physical or intellectual impairment. Antonym of 'ability'.

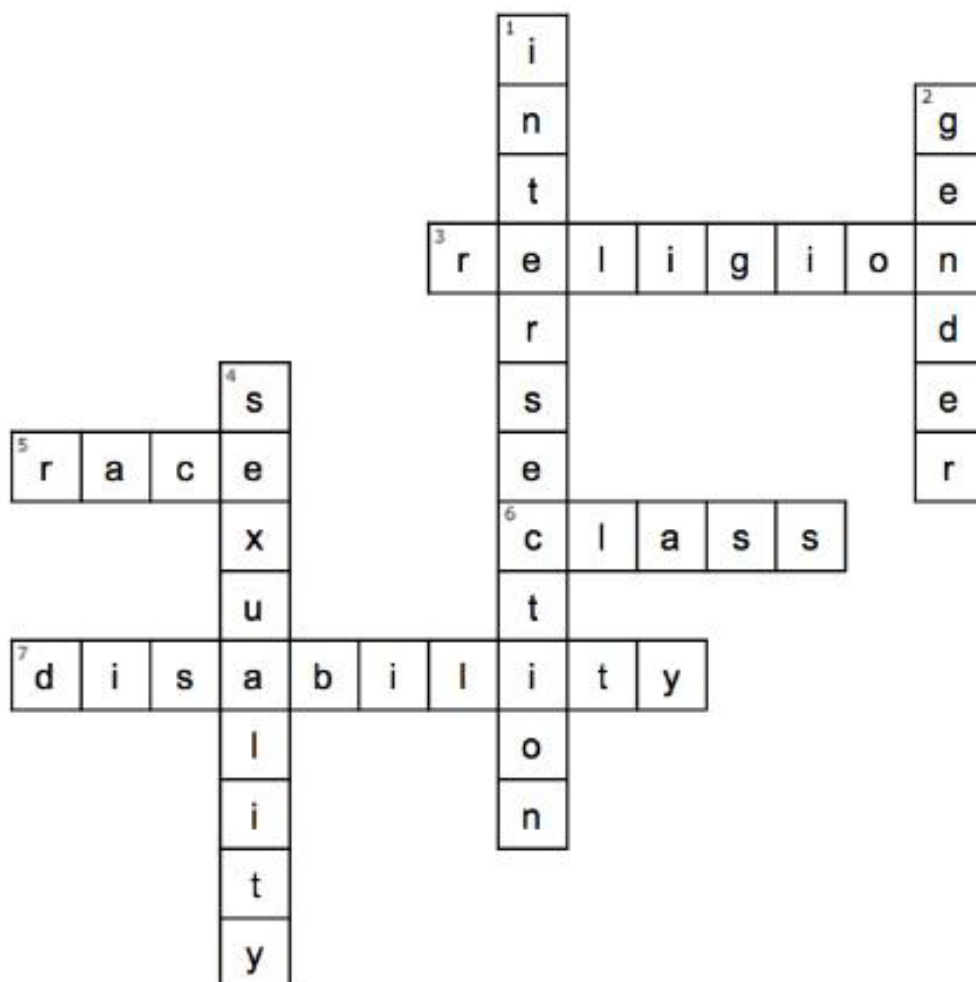
### DOWN

- 1. A place where two or more roads meet, a junction.
- 2. Socially or culturally defined ideas about femininity (female roles, attributes and behaviours) and masculinity (male roles, attributes and behaviours).
- 4. A person's feelings or attraction to other people, including their sexual thoughts and feelings and sexual preferences.



# 'CROSSROADS'

## INTERSECTIONALITY - ANSWERS



### ACROSS

3. A specific set of beliefs and practices. For example, Islam, Christianity or Buddhism.
5. A way of classifying people based on physical characteristics, such as skin colour. This word is also used to describe competing with another person in order to come first.
6. Working, middle and upper are all words used to describe this social structure.
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### DOWN

1. A place where two or more roads meet, a junction.
2. Socially or culturally defined ideas about femininity (female roles, attributes and behaviours) and masculinity (male roles, attributes and behaviours).
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# INTERSECTIONALITY

# THE BASICS

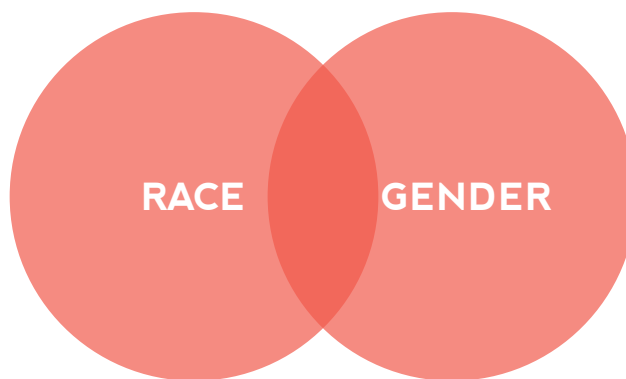
---

The key part of the term Intersectionality is '**intersection**'.

The term Intersectionality was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, in response to the Second Wave feminist movement, which was regarded as focusing almost exclusively on the way in which gender discrimination affected white women.

Crenshaw argued that Second Wave feminism did not recognise that black women were simultaneously experiencing discrimination on the basis of their gender **and** their race.

She said that the experience of being a black woman could not be understood simply in terms of being black, or of being a woman, but must be understood instead in terms of the interactions between these two identities or the way in which they **intersected**, enabling discrimination on the basis of **two characteristics at the same time**.



The concept of Intersectionality then expanded to include the way in which at first women - but then all members of a community - could **simultaneously** experience discrimination on the basis of a variety of biological, social and cultural categories such as gender, race, class, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, education and class: **intersecting discrimination** contributes to systematic injustice and social inequality.

It is also possible for **privilege** and discrimination to intersect. For example a white man who identifies as gay might experience social advantage because of his sex and his race, but experience disadvantage because of his sexuality and his level of education.

**Remember:** Intersectionality is the way in which multiple forms of discrimination may affect a person at the same time.



# UNDERSTANDING OBJECT- IFICATION

# UNIT 2

## UNDERSTANDING OBJECTIFICATION

### LESSON 1

*What is Objectification?*

---

### LESSON 2

*Subjects & Objects*

---

### LESSON 3

*Objectification in Practice*

---

### LESSON 4

*Written on the Body*

---

### LESSON 5

*Who Does it Hurt?*  
*The connection between*  
*Objectification & Violence*



# WHAT IS OBJECTIFICATION?

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**GROUP** Whole group and Table group  
**TIME** 90 minutes or 2 x 45 minutes

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will develop an understanding of the key term 'objectification'

Students will reflect upon their own attitudes and beliefs with regard to the practice of objectification

Students will think critically about their understanding of the concepts of 'sex' and 'gender'

## BACKGROUND

This activity introduces students to the concept of 'objectification'. It encourages students to reflect upon their own knowledge and experience of objectification, and to think about their participation in or experience of the practice. The lesson will establish the groundwork for deeper exploration of the issues related to the concept of objectification.

## ACTIVITIES

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1. Four Corners Activity: Personal Experiences of Objectification
2. Table Group Discussion

## PREPARATION & MATERIALS

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- One copy of Handout 1: 'What is?' displayed clearly in the classroom
- One copy of Handout 2: 'Four Corners' statements
- One copy per student of Handout 3: 'Someone as Opposed to Something: What is Objectification?'
- One set of Agree/Disagree cards to be placed in the four corners of the room before commencing the activity
- A3 paper: one sheet per table group

### PROCEDURE

1. Explain to students that the activity they are going to be undertaking will require them to think about their personal experience of sex and gender.
2. Begin by drawing your students' attention to the definitions of 'Sex' and Gender' outlined in the 'What is?' cards. Read both definitions to the class and ensure that all students have an understanding of the difference between the two terms. It is important to acknowledge that there is a diversity of experiences of gender and that not all individuals identify with the sex/gender they have been assigned.
3. Explain to students that you will be reading a set of statements out to them. In response to each statement, they must move to the corner of the room that most closely reflects their response to the statement. Students may Agree, Strongly Agree, Disagree or Strongly Disagree. Discourage 'fence sitting' but encourage questions that may help to clarify the statement for the class.
4. Read the first statement and instruct students to move to their preferred corner of the room.
5. Once students have taken a position, ask the following questions, ensuring that you solicit responses from more than one corner of the room, and from more than one student:

- *Why did you choose to Agree/Disagree with the statement?*
- *How might the scenario described in the statement make a person feel?*
- *How might the scenario in the statement make a person act?*
- *Are there any noticeable similarities or differences amongst the students in each corner?*
- *Would anyone feel comfortable to elaborate on his or her experience as it relates to this particular statement?*

6. Once you have read through (and students have responded to) the 'Four Corner' statements, instruct students to arrange themselves in table groups of 4-5. Each table should nominate a recorder and a reporter: the reporter will write 1-2 responses from the group up on the board when requested.

Ask students to discuss and record any key ideas or themes that they think have emerged as a result of the Four Corners activity. Teacher assistance may be required at this step.

7. Once students have had sufficient time to discuss the activity, ask the speaker from each table to write 1-2 key ideas or themes from their discussion up on the board, using a table like the one below.

THEME	EXAMPLE	WHO DOES IT PRIMARILY AFFECT?
Valuing bodies for the way they look	Catcalling on the street	Mostly the girls in the classroom

8. Distribute a copy of Handout 3, 'Someone as Opposed to Something: What is Objectification?' to each student and read through the handout with the class. Check for understanding and repeat any key points as necessary.
9. Conclude the class with a discussion of the following questions:

- *Can you find examples of objectification in the Four Corners statements we have just used for this activity?*
- *How does each example illustrate the practice of objectification?*

# WHAT IS SEX?

Sex can be understood as the difference in the biological characteristics of females and males, determined by a person's genes. For example, females produce eggs and can become pregnant.

Males have testicles and produce sperm.

Sex is not the same as gender.

In some instances a person may be classified as biologically female or male at birth, but feel very strongly that their sex – female or male – does not match their gender identity.

*Population Council's (2009) It's All One Curriculum: Guidelines and Activities for A Unified Approach to Sexuality, Gender, HIV and Human Rights Education.*



# WHAT IS GENDER?

---

Gender is not the same as sex. Gender can be understood as socially or culturally defined ideas about femininity (female roles, attributes and behaviours) and masculinity (male roles, attributes and behaviours). Gender roles are learnt. These ideas are not innate or 'natural'.

In every society, gender norms and gender roles influence people's lives, including their sexual lives. Greater equality and more flexible gender roles give everyone more opportunities to develop to their full capacity as human beings. It is important to know that many people do not identify as exclusively 'female' or exclusively 'male' with regard to their gender identity.

*Population Council's (2009) It's All One Curriculum: Guidelines and Activities for A Unified Approach to Sexuality, Gender, HIV and Human Rights Education.*

**AGREE**

**DISAGREE**

**STRONGLY  
AGREE**

**STRONGLY  
DISAGREE**

## UNIT 2 / LESSON 1

### FOUR CORNERS STATEMENTS

**I HAVE FELT PRESSURE TO CHANGE  
THE WAY I LOOK**

**I HAVE EXPERIENCED  
'WOLF-WHISTLING' OR 'CAT  
CALLING' IN A PUBLIC PLACE**

**I HAVE HAD SEXUAL COMMENTS  
CALLED OUT TO ME FROM  
A VEHICLE**

**I HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT I SHOULD  
BE FLATTERED IF PEOPLE MAKE  
COMMENTS ABOUT MY BODY**

**I HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT MY  
CLOTHING WAS PROVOCATIVE**

**I HAVE BEEN REFERRED TO OR  
HAVE HEARD PEOPLE OF THE SAME  
SEX OR GENDER I IDENTIFY WITH  
BEING REFERRED TO, AS 'THAT'  
OR 'IT'**

**OTHER PEOPLE FEEL THAT IT'S  
OK TO MAKE COMMENTS ABOUT  
MY BODY**

**I OFTEN SEE MYSELF DEPICTED IN  
THE MEDIA AS A SEXUAL OBJECT**

## UNIT 2 / LESSON 1

### FOUR CORNERS STATEMENTS cont.

**I OFTEN SEE MYSELF DEPICTED IN THE MEDIA AS PHYSICALLY STRONG**

**THE BODIES OF THE SEX OR GENDER I IDENTIFY WITH ARE OFTEN DIGITALLY ENHANCED**

**IF I WERE ABLE TO ACCESS THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE, IT WOULD NOT BE UNUSUAL FOR SOMEONE CLOSE TO ME TO 'GIVE ME AWAY'**

**IF I WERE IN A POSITION OF POWER - (FOR EXAMPLE, A POLITICIAN) - IT'S LIKELY THAT PEOPLE WOULD COMMENT UPON MY BODY AND THE THINGS I WEAR.**

**IN VIDEO GAMES I OFTEN SEE MYSELF DEPICTED AS STRONG RATHER THAN 'SEXY'**

**IF I WERE AN ELITE SPORTSPERSON, I WOULD BE DEPICTED AS FIERCE AND COMPETITIVE**

**THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF MY BODY IS OFTEN REFERRED TO IN THE LYRICS OF THE MUSIC THAT MYSELF AND MY PEERS LISTEN TO**

**PEOPLE SEE MY CLOTHING AS A STATEMENT ABOUT MY ATTITUDE TOWARDS SEXUAL ACTIVITY**

## UNIT 2 / LESSON 1

### FOUR CORNERS STATEMENTS cont.

**I OFTEN SEE MYSELF DEPICTED  
IN AN ACTIVE WAY IN  
ADVERTISEMENTS**

**I OFTEN SEE MYSELF DEPICTED  
IN A PASSIVE WAY IN  
ADVERTISEMENTS**

**THERE IS AN EXPECTATION THAT  
I WILL REMOVE MOST OF THE  
HAIR GROWING ON MY BODY  
FOR COSMETIC PURPOSES**

**THERE IS A SOCIAL PRESSURE FOR  
ME TO 'WATCH WHAT I EAT'**

**I AM COMFORTABLE WITH WOMEN  
BREASTFEEDING IN PUBLIC**

**SEXUAL ACTS LIKE INTERCOURSE  
ARE OFTEN DEPICTED AS BEING  
DONE 'TO ME' RATHER THAN  
'WITH ME'**

**MY CULTURAL BACKGROUND IS  
OFTEN RAISED WHEN THE MEDIA  
DEPICTS MY BODY**

**MY BODY IS OFTEN TREATED AS IF  
IT'S WEAK AND INEFFECTIVE**



## UNIT 2 / LESSON 1

# SOMEONE AS OPPOSED TO SOMETHING

# WHAT IS OBJECTIFICATION?

---

When you think of the word 'object' it's likely that you think of something that isn't human: a 'thing' that doesn't breathe, talk or think; perhaps a rock or a book or a cup. However, people are sometimes looked at, spoken about or treated like they are objects too.

When a human being is treated or viewed as if they are an object, it is called *objectification*.

Most research on the concept of objectification has shown that, despite an increase in the objectification of males, it is still females who experience the most significant rates of objectification.

A person may be objectified if:

- She is perceived as existing only for the pleasure or purpose of somebody else
- Her personal or intellectual ability is disregarded, reducing her role to one that is primarily sexual in nature (e.g. Her brain is not relevant and in mediums such as advertising her head will often not be shown)
- She is seen as a 'tool' for another's purposes, for example, to sell a product
- She is depicted or perceived as not having any power that is not connected to her sexuality
- She is depicted in a way that suggests that she is powerless or submissive as opposed to powerful and active
- She is seen as being owned by another person
- She is treated as if she is interchangeable with all other women who 'look like her'
- It is seen as permissible to dominate her or to be violent towards her
- There is no concern for her feelings and experiences (e.g. She is just a body)
- She is referred to using words like 'it' or 'that'

Some of the places you might find objectification are in advertising, media, pornography, art, beauty contests (or 'rate my attractiveness' exercises); in events such as beauty contests, and in public spaces (catcalling, harassment). Objectification is also expressed through the exertion of pressure (often unspoken) to undergo cosmetic surgery, particularly breast enlargement, surgical weight loss procedures and more recently, labiaplasty.

# UNDERSTANDING OBJECTIFICATION

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**GROUP** In pairs or triads & Whole class  
**TIME** 90 minutes, 2 x 45 minutes or 3 x 45 minutes

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will explore the ways in which written texts help to construct our understanding of gender

Students will identify and investigate some of their own beliefs with regard to gender norms

Students will develop an understanding of key terms related to the concept of objectification including the terms 'sexualised'; 'active'; passive'; 'object' and 'subject'.

## BACKGROUND

This class is intended to provide students with an opportunity to explore the way in which females and males are given (or denied) agency via popular representations of gender. It can be used to establish a basic understanding of some of the key terms associated with objectification, and will help to build on your student's initial understanding of the term, whilst preparing them for exploring the concept further in subsequent classes.

## ACTIVITIES

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1. Silent Conversations
2. Discussion & categorisation

## PREPARATION & MATERIALS

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- Stimuli: David Rowe cartoons
- One large piece of A3 or poster paper per pair or triad with a cartoon taped in the middle of the page.
- 1 x set of 'Key Term' cards, printed onto A4 or A3 paper
- 1 x copy per student of: 'Objectification The Tools of the Trade'
- Markers, pens, pencils

### PROCEDURE

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Ensure that you allow enough time for each component of the activity. It is important that key terms are clarified and explored as part of a group discussion at the end of the class. A suggested guide might be:

#### PART 1

1. Arrange students into pairs or triads. Provide each group with a cartoon attached to an A3 piece of paper. Inform students that they will each need a different coloured pen, marker or pencil for the activity.
2. Let students know that they are about to engage in a silent learning activity, where all communication must be done in writing; reinforce that once instructions have been given, it is important that students remain silent throughout the exercise. Ensure that all students are aware that after 15 minutes of silent work there will be an opportunity for movement, and that after a further 15 minutes there will be an opportunity for discussion.
3. Tell students that they will be required to view the image on their group's piece of poster paper and then to write a comment beneath it. Initial comments must be given in response to the stimulus, but may broaden to related topic areas as the activity progresses. Provide students with the following prompts as a starting point:

- *Describe what you can see in the cartoon*
  - *Characters*
  - *Setting*
  - *Colours*
  - *Layout*
- *What message does the cartoon seem to be communicating?*
- *Does it have any text? What issue might the text be alluding to?*
- *What sorts of facial expressions do the characters in the cartoons have and why might they have them?*
- *What images are prominent in the cartoon and why?*
- *What do you think the cartoon is trying to say?*

### PROCEDUREcont

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4. Now tell students that they are about to engage in a silent, 'written conversation'. Prompt students to read each other's responses to the stimulus and to write any questions they have onto their sheet of A3 paper. Students may wish to write beneath their peers' initial comment or to draw a line connecting their question to the comment: all students should write on the paper at the same time. Another member of the group – it doesn't have to be the student who wrote the initial comment - should then address the question/s that have been asked by writing a response below it/them.

### PART 2

1. Instruct students that they are to remain silent, but that they now have the opportunity to walk around the room and read the responses that other groups have made to their cartoons. Students should take their marker or pen with them so that they can write comments or questions on other groups' papers if they wish. You may wish to stipulate that each student must write at least one comment or question on another group's paper.
2. After the class have had an opportunity to look at each other's A3 sheets, let them know that they no longer need to be silent. They should return to their group and to their cartoon and look at any comments written by their classmates. Ask students to discuss the following points:
  - The comments they have made on their own paper
  - The comments they read on other groups' papers
  - Comments made by others on their paper
  - What is the key issue or question that jumps out at them as a result of the discussion of their own or other groups' cartoon?
3. Whilst students are discussing their stimulus, place the A4 or A3 'Key Term Cards' up around the room.

### PART 3

1. Conclude the class by facilitating a whole-group discussion related to each cartoon. Allow each table to present one or two key points or questions and then guide students through the 'Objectification The Tools of the Trade' handout. Ask students to make links between the issues raised by their cartoon and the relevant key term/s.
2. Have each group place their A3 piece of paper up on the wall under the 'Key Term' Card that they think is most relevant to their stimulus. This will create a visual example for each key term that can be retained in your classroom for reference in future classes. Give students the opportunity to discuss and clarify the placement of their A3 sheet & cartoon and to identify whether there was an additional 'Key Term' that could have applied to their image.





















# OBJECTIFICATION: THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE

# SEXUALISED

---

When a person is sexualised, they are seen as a **‘thing’ for other people’s sexual use or viewing pleasure**, rather than as a person who has feelings or is able to act independently or make their own decisions. A sexualised person is often used to present a stereotypical standard of physical attractiveness, which reinforces an ideal of who ‘can’ and ‘can’t’ be considered sexy or sexual.

People who are sexualised are often portrayed in positions of inferiority, whilst other attributes especially their sexual attributes – are portrayed as their **most important assets**, which is sometimes presented as being liberating and empowering.

# OBJECTIFICATION: THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE

# ACTIVE

---

The opposite of passive.

A person who is depicted or viewed as being active (or as an active **subject**) is often represented as someone who **acts** rather than being acted upon, whose **primary** purpose is to **look** rather than to be **looked at**.

**Active** in this sense doesn't necessarily mean physically active; it also means whether a person is depicted as having power, rather than being powerless.

In a forum like advertising, a person may be represented as being **active** because they are assertive (e.g. a fireman) or because they dominate or are more powerful than another person in the same image (e.g. 'damsel in distress' being rescued by the fireman).

## OBJECTIFICATION: THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE

# PASSIVE

---

The opposite of active.

A person who is depicted or viewed as being passive (or as a passive subject) is represented as someone who is **acted upon** rather than having any power to act her or himself. They have things done **to them**, as opposed to doing things to someone else. For example, in advertising, a person may be represented as being weak and helpless rather than active and powerful, or as someone whose **primary purpose** is to be looked **at** rather than looking.

# OBJECTIFICATION: THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE

# OBJECT

---

When a person is seen and/or treated as if they are an **object**, their body, body parts or appearance are seen as the most valuable thing about them. When a person is seen as an object they are treated or viewed as if they have no feelings or emotions, and as if their body or body parts are interchangeable with other objects (either other people or other 'things'). A person who is viewed or treated as if they are an object may also be treated as if they are 'owned' by another person and/or as if they have no personal power or choice. An 'object' as opposed to a 'subject' may be referred to using words like 'that' or 'it'.

# OBJECTIFICATION: THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE

## SUBJECT

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In the context of our class, a subject is a person who can observe or look at other people (in contrast to an object, who is observed or looked upon).

A subject is a person who is portrayed as possessing perspectives, experiences, feelings, beliefs, and desires.

A subject is a person who can be considered as having a unique personality and unique experiences.

A subject is a person who is valued for their whole self rather than just their body.

These characteristics may be represented symbolically in mediums such as advertising or cartoons.

**SEXUALISED**

**PASSIVE**



**ACTIVE**

**Project**

# PROJECT

**UNSURE**

# OBJECTIFICATION IN PRACTICE

## GROUP TIME

Individual & class  
90 minutes or 2 x 45 minutes

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will build on their understanding of the following key terms: sexualised, active/passive and object/subject

Students will apply the concept of objectification to a variety of visual images

Students will begin to develop an understanding of the role of the media in objectification

### BACKGROUND

This class is designed to encourage students to explore the way in which the media and popular culture represent the bodies of women and men. It has also been designed to consolidate students' understanding of the concept of objectification, and to encourage students to engage in a conversation about gendered representations of bodies in popular culture.

### ACTIVITIES

1. What are the odds? Patterns of Objectification
2. Ticking the boxes: Objectification Checklist

### PREPARATION & MATERIALS

- If using 'Kahoot®' or 'Survey Monkey®' to create an interactive digital survey, you must prepare your survey before the class. Refer to the screenshots in the appendix for examples of how to use Survey Monkey®.
- 10-20 images of women and men taken from popular culture (advertisements work very well) collected before commencing the lesson. Ensure that you have a wide variety of visual stimuli: there are many sites online that list advertisements that implicitly or explicitly condone objectification or violence. It is also important that the images be culturally and racially diverse. Alternatively, if you have time you may choose to have students source the images in class.
- Access to computers or iPads
- 1 x copy per table group of: 'Objectification The Tools of the Trade'
- 1 x copy of 'Objectification The Tools of the Trade' photocopied onto A3 paper and placed around the room
- One copy of the Objectification Checklist per student

## PROCEDURE

## PART 1

1. Place an Objectification: The Tools of the Trade' handout on each table so that students can refer to the terms as required. In addition, place A3 copies of the handout around the room so that are easily visible. Run through the definitions with students before commencing the class, and clarify understanding as required.
2. Instruct students to draw up the voting table below in their books (see example below) or draw the table up on the board. Alternatively, set up a survey using a site like Kahoot or Survey Monkey to enable students to enter their voting responses online: a visual representation of responses can then be shown anonymously to the whole class, which is a great way of keeping students engaged in the topic.

Figure 1. Results Table

IMAGE	SEX OF PERSON IN THE IMAGE	ACTIVE	PASSIVE	SEXUALISED	NOT SEXUALISED	OBJECT	SUBJECT
Eg. Game Avatar	Male	✓			✓		✓

3. If students are required to source the visual stimulus in class themselves, instruct them to locate at least 5 images of women and men from popular culture; stipulate that the images be culturally diverse but do not stipulate the number of images of females vs. males. Allow students to decide upon the gender breakdown themselves. Students will share their images with the rest of the class.
- Show one image (that you have prepared or that a student has found) to the class at a time and ask students to think about how the terms below might apply to the individual/s who features in the image. Responses should be recorded in the Results Table (Figure 1.) or, if the images have been collected beforehand, entered into your online survey. Students may refer to the 'Objectification The Tools of the Trade' handout on their table or up on the board/wall to check definitions.

Active	Non-sexualised	Object
Passive	Sexualised	Subject

You may find the following prompts useful:

- *What are the eyes of the individuals in the image doing? Are they looking at the audience? Do they look submissive? Are they challenging or confident?*
- *What sort of facial expressions do the individuals in the images have? What might they be intended to communicate?*
- *What sort of physical stance do the individuals in the images have? What does this stance suggest to you or what might it be intended to suggest?*
- *What sort of clothing are the individuals in the images wearing? What might their clothing be intended to communicate or suggest to the audience?*

4. Follow the same process for 5-10 images, depending on individual class timing.
5. Add up the votes as they relate to each sex.

For example, how many males vs. females are portrayed as active, how many females are portrayed as passive?

Facilitate a discussion focusing on the following questions:

- How are females and males depicted differently in these images?
- What sorts of patterns emerge when we look at these images?
- Are there any exceptions to the pattern?
- Do we see these exceptions regularly?
- How might these sorts of depictions make people feel?

## PART 2

1. Provide students with a copy of the Objectification Checklist.  
Ask them to look at the images that have received the most votes by the class in the categories of passive/sexualised/object. Alternatively, you could have students choose two of the images that they found the most interesting, and

focus on those images. For each image, instruct the students to check the boxes on the 'Objectification Checklist' that apply to the image.

2. Revisit the discussion questions from Part I (above). E.g. how are females and males depicted differently in these images?
3. Conclude the class by providing a summary of the ideas students came up with and discussing the patterns they identified with regard to the representation of women and men in popular culture. What conclusions can students draw from this exercise?



# OBJECTIFICATION CHECKLIST

---

- ☐ Is the person perceived or depicted as existing only for the pleasure or purpose or some body else?
- ☐ Is the person depicted primarily as being sexual, with their personal or intellectual ability disregarded? (E.g. the person's brain is not relevant and in images their head will often not be shown).
- ☐ Is the person depicted as a 'tool' for another's purposes, for example, to sell a product?
- ☐ Is the person depicted or perceived as not having any power that is not connected to their sexuality?
- ☐ Is the person depicted in a way that suggests that they are powerless or submissive as opposed to powerful and active?
- ☐ Could the person be seen as being "owned" by another person?
- ☐ Is the person treated as if they are interchangeable with all other people who 'look like them'?
- ☐ Is it seen as "OK" to dominate the person, to be in a position of power in relation to them or to be violent towards them?
- ☐ Are the person's feelings and experiences disregarded (e.g. They are just a 'body')?
- ☐ Is the person referred to using words like 'it' or 'that' or is their body referred as an object to be 'used'?
- ☐ Is the person's appearance the most important thing about them?
- ☐ Is the person used in the place of another object (e.g. a rug or a table)

# WRITTEN ON THE BODY

**GROUP TIME** Whole group & Individual  
90 minutes or 2 x 45 minutes

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will explore the physical and psychological affects related to objectification

Students will think critically about the impact of visual images and the message they construct about what characteristics constitute 'beauty'

Students will be able to reflect upon and challenge the idea that the standards of beauty encoded in objectifying images are not 'natural' but culturally constructed

## BACKGROUND

This lesson is intended to enable students to explore the relationship between 'objectification' and the physical and psychological effects associated with unrealistic representation of the body in popular culture. It encourages students to reflect upon their own knowledge, experience of and involvement in the process of objectification, and prompts them to consider the health implications related to the concept and its practice.

**Important:** Contact details for support agencies related to disordered eating can be found in the appendix of this resource and should be made available to students in the class.

## ACTIVITIES

1. Visual analysis
2. Discussion
3. Re-advertising task

## PREPARATION & MATERIALS

- 1 x A3 colour copy of Fitzroy High School Feminist Collective's Poster "How Objectification Affects the Body: An Illustrated Chart" or a digitally projected copy of the poster
- One A4 copy of "How Objectification Affects the Body: An Illustrated Chart" per student (optional)
- Access to internet
- 1 x copy per student of 'Eating Disorders: Further Information'
- One copy of 'Re-advertised' activity handout per student

## UNIT 2 / LESSON 4

### PROCEDURE

#### PART 1

1. Ensure that all students in the class can see the 'How Objectification Affects the Body: An Illustrated Chart' poster. You may want to consider using a screen that the whole class can see, or projecting the image onto the board or wall.
2. Give students some time to look at the poster carefully, and then consider the following questions as a whole group:

- *What is the first thing that you notice about the poster?*
- *What might the heading or tagline refer to? Why was this heading/tagline chosen?*
- *Why have two parts of the 'skin' of the anatomical model been pulled back? What do they reveal? Why?*
- *What is the connection between the statistics featured on the poster and the concept of objectification?*
- *Why do the statistics chosen relate to young women?*
- *Who is the poster targeting?*
- *What message is the poster trying to communicate?*

#### PART 2 (10 MINS)

1. Read through the 'Eating Disorders: Further Information' handout with students to provide some clarification about the prevalence of eating disorders. Though the statistics show that eating disorders still primarily affect young women, it's important to acknowledge that the incidence of young men experiencing eating disorders in Australia is also on the rise.
2. Give students time to ask questions and to express how they feel about the statistics. You may wish to use the following prompts:

The FHS Feminist Collective poster focuses on the harm done to young women through the process of objectification, because Victorian and Australian statistics still show that young women are the single largest group affected by eating disorders. However, it is critical to acknowledge the increasing numbers of young men affected by eating disorders and to allow students to focus on male subjects when undertaking the 'Re-advertised' activity in Step 4 of the lesson, if that is where their interest lies.

- *Do the images we see every day in the media, online, in films etc. have an impact on how we think we should look?*
- *What other sorts of factors might lead to a person developing an eating disorder?*
- *How might both of these factors relate to the statistics about eating disorders we've just read through?*

### PART 3 (35 MINS)

1. Give students a copy of the 'Re-advertised' activity handout. Read through the instructions with students and then allow time for them to create an advertisement for one of the products listed (or another product, to be negotiated with you) that focuses on representing a healthy body image.
2. Allow time at the end of the class for the sharing of images and a brief discussion of how the 're-advertised' product differs from 'mainstream' advertising and its representation of bodies. The focus should be on clarifying how our daily exposure to images of bodies that fit a stereotypical mould of 'beauty' contributes to negative body image and to illnesses such as eating disorders.



# HOW OBJECTIFICATION AFFECTS THE BODY

## AN ILLUSTRATED CHART

1 90% OF CASES OF ANOREXIA AND BULIMIA OCCUR IN FEMALES

2 THE RISK OF DEATH FROM ANOREXIA IS 12 TIMES HIGHER THAN THE ANNUAL DEATH RATE FROM ALL CAUSES IN FEMALES AGED 15 TO 24 YEARS OF AGE

3 EATING DISORDERS ARE THE 3RD MOST COMMON CHRONIC ILLNESS IN YOUNG WOMEN

4 BULLYING AND TEASING RELATED TO APPEARANCE IS A RISK FACTOR IN DEVELOPING AN EATING DISORDER

5 THE PRESSURE TO ACHIEVE THE 'IDEAL BODY' INCREASES LOW SELF-ESTEEM AND BODY DISSATISFACTION IN GIRLS

6 EATING DISORDERS AFFECT EVERY MAJOR ORGAN IN THE BODY



FACEBOOK.COM/FHSFEMINISTCOLLECTIVE



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HIGH SCHOOL

WWW.FITZROYHS.VIC.EDU.AU



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WWW.OURGOODHOOD.COM.AU



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# EATING DISORDERS

## FURTHER INFORMATION

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### WHAT IS AN EATING DISORDER?

An eating disorder is a mental illness, not a lifestyle choice, a diet gone wrong or a fad. An eating disorder is characterised when eating, exercise and body weight/shape become an unhealthy preoccupation of someone's life. There are a variety of eating disorders that can affect a person, with different characteristics and causes. However in general, eating disorder cases can be linked to low self esteem and an attempt to deal with underlying psychological issues through practising an unhealthy relationship with food.

**Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia are two of the most common eating disorders that affect our community.**

### SOME STATISTICS ON EATING DISORDERS IN AUSTRALIA

- Between 1995 and 2005 the prevalence of disordered eating behaviours doubled among both males and females
- Eating disorders occur in both females and males before puberty, however, the ratio of males to females is approximately 1 male to every 10 females during adolescence and decreases to 1 male in every 20 females during young adulthood
- Eating disorders are increasing in both younger and older age groups <sup>1</sup>
- At the end of 2012 it was estimated that eating disorders affected nearly 1 million Australians <sup>1</sup>
- Prevalence of eating disorders is increasing amongst boys and men but 90% of cases of anorexia nervosa (AN) and bulimia nervosa (BN) occur in females
- Approximately 15% of women experience an eating disorder at some point during their life. Australia's female population in 2014 is 50.23 million.
- An estimated 20% of females have an undiagnosed eating disorder
- Eating disorders are the 3rd most common chronic illness in young females
- Risk of premature death from an eating disorder is 6-12 times higher than the general population
- Eating disorders are ranked 12th among the leading causes of hospitalisation costs due to mental health
- Depression is experienced by approximately 45% to 86% of individuals with an eating disorder <sup>6</sup>
- Anxiety disorder is experienced by approximately 64% of individuals with an eating disorder <sup>7</sup>
- In 1998, 38 months after television first came to Nadroga, Fiji, 15% of girls, aged 17 on the average, admitted to vomiting to control weight. 74% of girls reported feeling "too big and fat" at least sometimes. Fiji has only one TV channel, which broadcasts mostly American, Australian, and British programs
- The Longitudinal Study on Women's Health, found that only 22% of women within a normal healthy weight range reported being happy with their weight. Almost three quarters (74%) desired to weigh less, including 68% of healthy weight and 25% underweight women
- A recent survey of 600 Australian children found that increasingly, children are disturbed by the relentless pressure of marketing aimed at them. A large majority (88%) believed that companies tried to sell them things that they do not really need
- Beyond Stereotypes, the 2005 study commissioned by Dove surveyed 3,300 girls and women between the ages of 15 and 64 in 10 countries. They found that 67% of all women 15 to 64 withdraw from life-engaging activities due to feeling badly about their looks

# RE-ADVERTISED

## PROMOTING A PRODUCT USING POSITIVE BODY IMAGE

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This task requires you to create a print advertisement that uses positive images of bodies to promote a product. You will 're-advertise' the product by changing the way it is marketed or sold to its audience. Depending on your classroom resources, you may wish to draw the poster with textas or pencils, or to create the poster as a digital file.

1. Begin by choosing one of the following products to sell in your advertisement: a hair removal product; underwear; men's deodorant; make up; perfume, or another product negotiated with your teacher. The product must be one that routinely features people's bodies in its advertising campaigns.
2. Once you have chosen a product, select one of the statistics from the 6 boxes on the 'How Objectification Affects the Body' poster.
3. Next, your task is to create an advertisement that addresses the statistic you have chosen, by making the ad's audience feel more positive about their body and their appearance. E.g. If you chose the box that contains the text 'Eating disorders are the most common illness in young women', you'll need to consider what sorts of images of women's bodies might help your audience to feel more accepted or more positive about their body.
4. Once you have finished your advertisement, write 2-3 dot points explaining how your advertisement differs from 'mainstream' advertising, which often uses stereotypical and unobtainable images of bodies to sell its products.
5. Share your ad, and your thoughts, with your class.

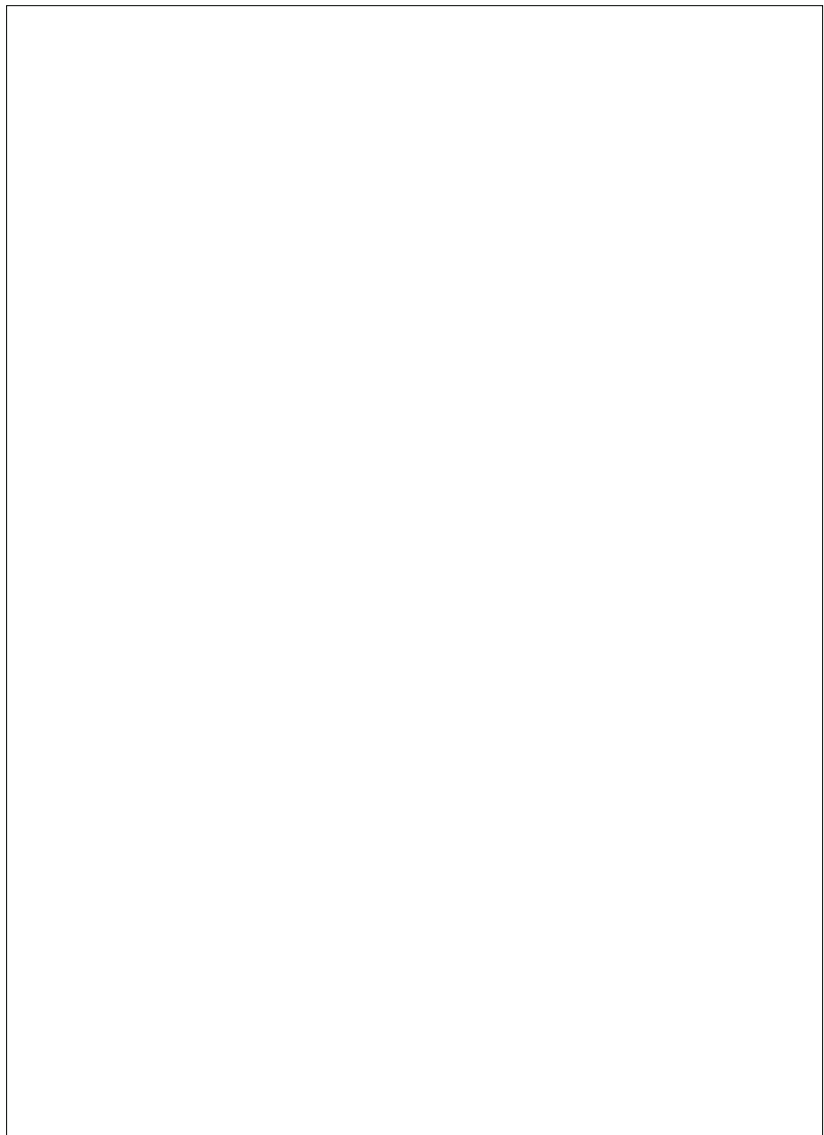
# RE-ADVERTISED

## PROMOTING A PRODUCT USING POSITIVE BODY IMAGE

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Before you start drawing, try to think laterally about how you might present your product. Write down any ideas that come to you, even if they seem silly. This process will help you to come up with some thoughts and ideas that you might be able to turn into an original, creative advertisement. If you're stuck, a good starting point might be looking at an ad that already exists for your product and working out what you would like to do differently.

This task requires you to create a print advertisement that uses positive images of bodies to promote a product. You will 're-advertise' the product by changing the way it is marketed or sold to its audience. Depending on your classroom resources, you may wish to draw the poster with textas or pencils, or to create the poster as a digital file.





# WHO DOES IT HURT?

## THE CONNECTION BETWEEN OBJECTIFICATION AND VIOLENCE

**GROUP TIME** Whole group & Individual  
90 minutes or 2 x 45 minutes

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will explore the link between objectification and violence

Students will think critically about the way in which objectification enables and reinforces violence against women

Students will understand and apply the concept of a continuum

Students will develop strategies to address objectifying behaviour

**Important Note:** As this class covers the subject of family violence and violence against women, it is important to inform students about the content before commencing the class. Such a 'warning' is designed to prevent people from experiencing a traumatic response to the subject matter by encountering it without advance notice. Students who do not wish to participate in the class should be allowed to withdraw, and may require support to do so inconspicuously.

### BACKGROUND

This class is intended to introduce students to the link between the practice of objectification and 'family violence'. The lesson builds on the understanding of objectification gained in lessons 1-4, and encourages students to think critically about the way in which 'everyday sexism' forms part of a continuum of greater harm.

### ACTIVITIES

1. Read & Discuss
2. Sex & Violence Continuum

### PREPARATION & MATERIALS

- Internet access required: *Take a Stand. Say 'no' to family violence* available via [www.fhsfemco.com](http://www.fhsfemco.com)
- 1 x copy of *Ken Lay On Family Violence* per student
- 1 x *Family Violence Excerpt* per group
- 1 x teacher copy or 1 x copy per student of *Reverse Sexism* and *Violence Towards Men*
- 1 x copy per student of *What Is A Continuum* handout
- 1 x teacher copy or 5 x group copies of the *Continuum Activity* handout

## UNIT 2 / LESSON 5

### PROCEDURE

#### PART 1 : READING & VIEWING

1. Organise students into 5 small groups and ensure that each student has a copy of the article “Ken Lay On Family Violence”.
2. Taking your time, read the article out to the class, asking students to follow along on their copy of the article. You may wish to have students read as well. It may be helpful to go through the boxed vocabulary words before reading the article.
3. Give one excerpt from the article to each table group, and ask them to discuss the associated questions, with one student taking on the role of scribe. The group will also need to nominate a member to feed their answers back to the class.

Provide time for feedback and discussion of group responses.

4. Show the clip “Take a Stand. Say No To Family Violence” found under the ‘resources’ tab at [www.fhsfemco.com](http://www.fhsfemco.com). After watching the clip, pose the following question to enable students to clarify the key argument from the clip:

*Ken Lay says that some guys think that groping women or abusing them with sexist insults is OK, and that it is not connected to domestic violence.*

*But he says, ‘I have news for your. It is all connected.’*

***What does he mean when he says this?***

Try to draw out the connections made between ‘everyday sexism’ and violence against women in both the article and the clip.

#### PART 2 : SORTING & ACTING

1. Read through the ‘What is a Continuum’ handout with students, clarifying understanding where necessary. Then, either as a class or in small groups, complete the ‘Continuum Activity’, discussing and then creating a continuum using the examples of sexist and violent behaviour provided.

Provide an opportunity for students to discuss why they have located particular behaviours at different points on the continuum.

### ...BUT NOT ALL MEN

This class has the potential to make young men feel that they are being ‘targeted’ by its focus on the violence perpetrated by men against women because ‘not all men’ commit acts of violence.

This is an important consideration and a potential stumbling block for learning. It is therefore suggested that teachers utilise the ‘Reverse Sexism and Violence Against Men’ handout to facilitate discussion of this issue.

Additional information about patterns of violence can be found on the facts and figures page of the **Our Watch** website, specifically the section titled: *What About Violence Against Men?*

<http://www.ourwatch.org.au/Understanding-Violence/Facts-and-figures>

The focus should be on clarifying and reinforcing the connection between behaviours that might be placed at the 'least serious' end of the continuum, like 'wolf whistling' and those that might be placed at the most serious end, like assault. Treating women like objects or like they are less valuable than men contributes to a culture where gender-based violence is enabled, ignored and even condoned.

2. Read students the following statement:

*"That's my challenge to you: be that circuit breaker. Be that person that says something – again and again and again."*

*Ken Lay*

3. Instruct students to create their own 'circuit breaking' continuum of behaviours that might challenge sexist and violent behaviour, beginning at one end with the 'least effective strategy' and concluding at the other end with the 'most effective'. Allow time for students to share, reflect upon and discuss their strategies at the end of the class.

## UNIT 2 / LESSON 5

# KEN LAY

## ON FAMILY VIOLENCE

---

I want you all to imagine something with me. Imagine that each week an Australian is murdered at a train station. That each week, someone's brother or sister; mother or father is violently killed getting on or off a train.

Picture it?

Now picture the public response. It would be a front-page news story in each of our capital cities. Police would flood our stations, while people would avoid public transport in favour of private cars. Congestion would quickly become a major problem, as the number of cars on the roads increased. The word "crisis" would pepper our talkback. Can you imagine it?

Okay.

Now I have another figure—a real figure—that I think is just as horrific. A figure that is just as worthy of galvanising our sympathy and outrage. But it doesn't. The figure is this: every week a woman is murdered by her partner or ex-partner.

Every week this happens. Now, our public response isn't at all like we imagined it would be if those victims died not in their family rooms but at train stations. Why do you think that is? I'll tell you why I think it is. Because what happens in someone else's home doesn't affect us. And because we are constantly misapprehending the nature of violence. We do this because we want to feel safer—so we apportion complicity to those who die violently. In our heads, we make them somehow responsible for the wickedness that befell them.

When we do this, we feel better. We feel safer. And it's also much, much easier to do this when the crimes are domestic—when they're behind closed doors. When it happens we might think "Well, why did she marry him?" just as we might think of a rape victim, "Well, why was she wearing a short skirt?" When we imagine this sort of complicity for the victim—when we essentially blame them—we are congratulating ourselves for our superior judgement, a judgement that will ensure it never happens to us. But when we do this we are injuring our imaginations, which is the lifeblood of our sympathy. When we do this, we come up with the wrong answers about why violence happens.

And when we do this, we make it less likely anybody will care enough to do anything. In blaming victims, we create a lot of myths about family violence. Here's some of them:

- *that the victim must have incited the abuse;*
- *that the victim is guilty of awful judgement;*
- *that if the woman's life was endangered, she would simply leave.*

No, no and no. These are myths and they're getting in the way of honesty. In order to discard these myths, I'm going to broaden our story a little.

The theme of tonight's forum is obviously family violence, but I place that in a long continuum of violence against women. I place family violence in a wider culture where vulgar and violent attitudes to women are common. So as I try to correct

## UNIT 2 / LESSON 5

### KEN LAY : ON FAMILY VIOLENCE

#### VOCABULARY

##### *Complicity*

Partnership or involvement in wrongdoing (even if you don't think that you are directly involved)

##### *Incited*

To have stirred, encouraged, or urged on

##### *Continuum*

a continuous sequence in which adjacent elements are not perceptibly different from each other, but the extremes are quite distinct

##### *Entitlement*

Feeling that you have a right to something

##### *Misspent*

To spend one's time foolishly, wastefully or unproductively

##### *Endorsement*

To give approval to someone or something

some myths tonight—and as I explain the urgency of this problem—let me begin at one end of the continuum. In July, I wrote a piece on violence against women as part of the Herald Sun's "Take a Stand" campaign that Minister Wooldridge generously noted earlier.

At the beginning of my piece I introduced a fictional—but unfortunately realistic—scenario.

Susie is 21. She's just finished uni exams and decides to head out for a night with friends. Within the first two hours she's been groped twice. The first from a leering drunk. The second happens from behind, anonymously, as Susie's making her way through a crowd. Susie feels a lot of things—saddened, humiliated and a little frightened. But she's not surprised. This, she knows, happens every single day. Some women plan their evenings around avoiding it. As men, how often—if ever—do we do that?

Now, if you're wondering what this has to do with tonight's theme, what it has to do with the drunk belting teeth from his wife's mouth, I'll tell you: Our culture is filled with men who hold an indecent sense of entitlement towards women. Our culture is heavy with warped and misspent masculinity. And every single day the casual groping and lewd comments that go unchallenged erode our standards. And if none of us are saying anything, then this feral atmosphere gets worse, until it becomes an endorsement of violence against women.

If you think I'm exaggerating, consider the recent World Health Organisation's report that found that violence against women had reached "a global health problem of epidemic proportions." And yes, that includes Australia. The Organisation's report found that a third of the world's women had been assaulted. If you think I'm exaggerating, consider Victoria's crime statistics for the previous financial year.

During 2012/13, there were 60,829 incidents where police submitted family incidence reports. This is a rise of 21.6% on the 50,000 reports submitted the previous year. 60,000 incidents in Victoria alone. Grim statistics can be found all over the world. In the United States, between 2000 and 2006, 3,200 US soldiers were killed. In that same time in the US, three times as many people were killed in domestic homicides. If you still think I'm exaggerating, consider the almost total absence in our culture of men writing about the casual molestation of women.

Violence against women—in whatever form—is not solely a feminist issue. It's a social issue... It's a blokes' issue. And if you still need to be convinced that this is a public matter,

just wonder where you think the 8-year-old boy who watches his Mum gurgles on her own blood ends up. Think about the kids.

So I've now explained to you some of our misapprehensions and myths about violence—that it's a private matter or that the victims are to blame somehow. And I've now explained to you the urgency. Now let me give you my challenges.

Men, I need your help in making any form of indecency against women deeply shameful. I want you to use the full measure of your profession and your passion to try to correct

## UNIT 2 / LESSON 5

### KEN LAY : ON FAMILY VIOLENCE

this. I want you to use radio and newspaper and TV; I want you to use boardroom and community meetings; I want you to talk about it with colleagues and children. Men, when an estimated 20% of Australian women have been sexually assaulted—and when we know that sexual assault is massively underreported—we can't say we don't have a problem. I want you to consider what shallow sense of masculinity validates abuse. I want you to consider what twisted sense of entitlement compels a man to grab a woman in a bar or call her a slut.

Men, I want you to consider why blokes are so quiet on these issues. Then I need you to correct that silence.

To all of you, I ask that you help repel a callousness that has crept into our society. Callousness and complacency. What I want to leave you with is a sense of the complacency we must battle. And a sense of the prevailing, damaging attitudes towards women. We must all stand up to these things wherever they occur. Not just at community forums. But on trams and trains and streets. In the workplace and our sporting clubs. With our children.

I talk a lot about ethical leadership in my position, and how I frame it for my audiences—how I explain why people fail to act—is often with what psychologists call the bystander effect. A famous case-study of this phenomenon comes from 1968, when a young New Yorker called Kitty Genovese was murdered in front of her apartment. About 40 witnesses did nothing. The bystander effect looks at why there is less likelihood of bystanders responding when there are more people around.

Now what psychologists have found is that people don't fail to intervene because of malice or indifference. What they found is that most people fail to intervene because of simple social anxiety. People become self-conscious: what if no-one else helps? What if my appraisal of the situation is wrong? What if my help isn't wanted? What if people think I'm a busybody? There's also the assumption that somebody else will help—an assumption that increases with a larger number of bystanders.

So what happens is there's a collective reluctance to act until somebody else has acted. Once somebody has, it becomes the normal thing to do—the barrier to action has been broken.

And that's my challenge to you: be that circuit-breaker. Be that person that says something—again and again and again. Because if we shrug our shoulders when a sex worker is murdered—or a wife is battered to death—then we're diminished as a community.

**Ken Lay**

Chief Commissioner of Police

#### VOCABULARY

##### *Molestation*

To bother, interfere with or annoy a person, or to make indecent sexual advances to them or to sexually assault them.

##### *Misapprehensions*

A mistaken belief or misunderstanding.

##### *Validates*

Gives an action value by substantiating, confirming or 'approving' of it.

##### *Callousness*

To show insensitivity, indifference or to be unsympathetic.

#### EXCERPT 1

*I want you all to imagine something with me. Imagine that each week an Australian is murdered at a train station. That each week, someone's brother or sister; mother or father is violently killed getting on or off a train. Picture it?*

*Now picture the public response. It would be a front-page news story in each of our capital cities. Police would flood our stations, while people would avoid public transport in favour of private cars. Congestion would quickly become a major problem, as the number of cars on the roads increased. The word "crisis" would pepper our talkback. Can you imagine it?*

*Okay.*

*Now I have another figure—a real figure—that I think is just as horrific. A figure that is just as worthy of galvanising our sympathy and outrage. But it doesn't.*

*The figure is this: every week a woman is murdered by her partner or ex-partner.*

*Every week this happens. Now, our public response isn't at all like we imagined it would be if those victims died not in their family rooms but at train stations.*

*Why do you think that is?*

### KEN LAY ON FAMILY VIOLENCE - EXCERPTS

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#### EXCERPT 2

*In our heads, we make them somehow responsible for the wickedness that befell them.*

*When we do this, we feel better. We feel safer. And it's also much, much easier to do this when the crimes are domestic—when they're behind closed doors.*

*When it happens we might think "Well, why did she marry him?" just as we might think of a rape victim, "Well, why was she wearing a short skirt?" When we imagine this sort of complicity for the victim—when we essentially blame them—we are congratulating ourselves for our superior judgement, a judgement that will ensure it never happens to us. But when we do this we are injuring our imaginations, which is the lifeblood of our sympathy. When we do this, we come up with the wrong answers about why violence happens.*

#### EXCERPT 3

*Now, if you're wondering what this has to do with tonight's theme, what it has to do with the drunk belting teeth from his wife's mouth, I'll tell you: Our culture is filled with men who hold an indecent sense of entitlement towards women. Our culture is heavy with warped and misspent masculinity. And every single day the casual groping and lewd comments that go unchallenged erode our standards. And if none of us are saying anything, then this feral atmosphere gets worse, until it becomes an endorsement of violence against women.*



#### EXCERPT 4

*Now let me give you my challenges.*

*Men, I need your help in making any form of indecency against women deeply shameful. I want you to use the full measure of your profession and your passion to try to correct this. I want you to use radio and newspaper and TV; I want you to use boardroom and community meetings; I want you to talk about it with colleagues and children. Men, when an estimated 20% of Australian women have been sexually assaulted—and when we know that sexual assault is massively underreported—we can't say we don't have a problem. I want you to consider what shallow sense of masculinity validates abuse. I want you to consider what twisted sense of entitlement compels a man to grab a woman in a bar or call her a slut.*

*Men, I want you to consider why blokes are so quiet on these issues. Then I need you to correct that silence.*

#### EXCERPT 5

*A famous case-study of this phenomenon comes from 1968, when a young New Yorker called Kitty Genovese was murdered in front of her apartment. About 40 witnesses did nothing. The bystander effect looks at why there is less likelihood of bystanders responding when there are more people around.*

*Now what psychologists have found is that people don't fail to intervene because of malice or indifference. What they found is that most people fail to intervene because of simple social anxiety. People become self-conscious: what if no-one else helps? What if my appraisal of the situation is wrong? What if my help isn't wanted? What if people think I'm a busybody? There's also the assumption that somebody else will help—an assumption that increases with a larger number of bystanders. So what happens is there's a collective reluctance to act until somebody else has acted. Once somebody has, it becomes the normal thing to do—the barrier to action has been broken.*

*And that's my challenge to you: be that circuit-breaker. Be that person that says something—again and again and again. Because if we shrug our shoulders when a sex worker is murdered—or a wife is battered to death—then we're diminished as a community.*

## UNIT 2 / LESSON 5

### KEN LAY ON FAMILY VIOLENCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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#### EXCERPT 1

*What does Ken Lay say the public response would be to someone's brother, sister, mother or father being violently killed getting on or off a train, every week of the year?*

*What does he say about the public response (or lack of response) to the most recent Victorian statistics, which tell us that one woman a week is murdered by her husband or partner?*

*Why do you think the public response would be different?*

#### EXCERPT 2

*What does Ken Lay mean when he says that 'we are congratulating ourselves for our superior judgment, a judgment that will ensure it never happens to us' when he talks about victim blaming?*

*What does Lay mean when he says that when we victim-blame we are 'injuring our imaginations, which is the lifeblood of our sympathy'?*

#### EXCERPT 3

*What does Ken Lay mean when he says that 'men hold an indecent sense of entitlement towards women'?*

*How does 'none of us saying anything' about women being groped or about women having to plan their evenings around avoiding sexual harassment become an 'endorsement of violence against women'?*

## UNIT 2 / LESSON 5

### KEN LAY ON FAMILY VIOLENCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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#### EXCERPT 4

*Why does Ken Lay specifically target men and not women by saying 'Men, I need your help...?'*

*What does he want men to do about violence against women?*

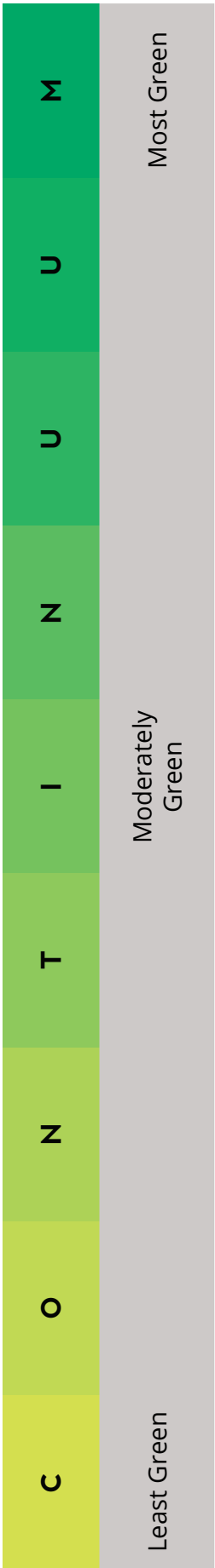
*What does he mean when he says that a 'shallow sense of masculinity validates abuse.'*

#### EXCERPT 5

*What is the bystander effect?*

*What does Lay mean by challenging us to be a 'circuit breaker'?*

*What sorts of actions – or words - do you think Lay would like members of the community to take in regard to violence against women?*



A continuum (pronounced “kon-TIN-yoo-um”) is a tool used to represent a range of characteristics that are connected to one another. A continuum often uses a scale that progresses from ‘least’ to ‘most’, and represents subtly changing shades of difference. The order in which items are placed on a continuum involves an element of subjectivity, so there is not necessarily a ‘right’ answer in terms of how an item is ranked.

It is important to note that a continuum related to violence does not suggest that the experience of a person at the ‘most serious’ end of the scale is more traumatic than the experience of the person at the ‘least serious’ end of the scale, because each person’s experience of violence is highly personal and depends on their individual circumstances.

## UNIT 2 / LESSON 5

# A CONTINUUM OF SEXIST & VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR

*Either with your class or with your group, you will be asked to place the following behaviours on a continuum, with the number '1' indicating 'least serious' and the number '10' indicating 'most serious.'*

<b>GRABBING A WOMAN'S BREAST ON A CROWDED TRAM</b>	<b>REACHING UP A WOMAN'S SKIRT AT A BAR</b>
<b>PUTTING SEXUALLY SUGGESTIVE POSTERS OF WOMEN UP IN THE WORKPLACE</b>	<b>CALLING A WOMAN A 'SLUT' AS SHE WALKS DOWN THE STREET</b>
<b>MAKING A SEXIST JOKE</b>	<b>SEXUAL ASSAULT</b>
<b>PHYSICAL ASSUALT</b>	<b>GROPING WOMEN WITHOUT THEIR CONSENT</b>
<b>MURDER</b>	<b>WOLF-WHISTLING AT A WOMAN</b>

## UNIT 2 / LESSON 5

# A CONTINUUM OF SEXIST & VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR

*Cut the numbers out and lay them in order on the floor or table*

<b>1</b> LEAST SERIOUS	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b> MODERATELY SERIOUS	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> MOST SERIOUS



# THE USE OF SEXIST LANGUAGE

# UNIT 3

## THE USE OF SEXIST LANGUAGE

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### LESSON 1

*Sticks & Stones*

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### LESSON 2

*Unpacking Sexist Language*

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### LESSON 3

*Challenging Gender Norms*

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### LESSON 4

*Sexism Stings*  
*'Slut' as a Gendered Insult*

---

### LESSON 5

*Fighting Back*





# STICKS & STONES

**GROUP  
TIME**

Whole group and small group  
90 minutes or 2 x 45 minutes

**LEARNING  
OUTCOMES**

Students will explore the  
idea that language creates  
and supports gender  
inequality

Students will explore the  
way in which language  
may be used to discredit or  
stereotype a person

Students will reflect upon  
their own use of language  
in relation to reinforcing  
gender inequality

**BACKGROUND**

This lesson is designed to encourage students to begin thinking about the use of gendered or sexist language, and the way in which sexist language might be 'taken for granted' in everyday life. It may work as a one-off activity, or can be used to lay the groundwork for a more in depth look at the connection between gendered language and gender inequality.

**ACTIVITIES**

1. Same Same, but Different: Setting the Scene
2. Brain Dump: Sexist Stereotypes

**PREPARATION & MATERIALS**

- 7 x sheets of A3 Paper
- 1 copy of 'Sexism: A Basic Definition' per group

When undertaking this activity it is important to acknowledge openly with students that not everyone perceives themselves as belonging to the sex they were assigned at birth, nor do they feel comfortable identifying as a 'girl' or a 'boy'. You may wish to alert students to the appropriate support services, found in the index of the resource.

### PROCEDURE

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#### PART 1 : INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY

1. Ask students to arrange themselves into a circle.
2. Begin by asking students to identify one respect in which everyone in the circle is like everyone else (e.g. everyone is human, or everyone has arms etc.). Write responses on the board.
3. Secondly, ask students to identify one respect in which both the girls and boys in the circle may be considered to be alike. You may need to provide students with some examples (E.g. Both Student A and Student B live in the same area or like a particular author or play the same sport) or provide a minute or two for students to think about the question. Add responses to the board.
4. Finally, ask students to identify some of the ways in which the girls and boys in the circle perceive themselves as not being alike. Encourage students to think broadly in this last step by prompting them to consider their experience in the world, as opposed to their simple physical differences. For example, you may wish to ask students to think about whether they see themselves represented equally in their country's government or whether they have the same experience of undertaking chores at home as a sibling of the opposite sex. Write responses on the board and discuss any key issues raised before moving on to Part II of the lesson.

#### PART 2 : EXPOSING GENDERED STEREOTYPES

1. Explain to students that they are now going to move on to exploring the notion of sexist stereotypes. Divide the class in to seven small groups and allocate each group one of the following categories:
  - Physical Appearance
  - Sexuality
  - Domestic Duties
  - Sporting ability
  - Strength/Weakness
  - Parenthood
  - Expression of emotion
2. Ensure that each group has a copy of the handout 'Sexism: A basic definition' and read through the definition with the class before proceeding. Check understanding before continuing.

3. Ask students to discuss and then write down all of the stereotypes they can think of that relate to how gender is perceived with regard to the category their group has been assigned. They may wish to include platitudes that reinforce negative gender stereotypes, for example the phrase 'to kick like a girl'. Emphasise that writing down a sexist platitude or a sexist stereotype does not imply that the student themselves agrees with that belief.
4. Ask each group to share their responses to the category they were assigned. Facilitate a discussion in which students consider the questions below:

You may wish to give students some time to discuss the questions in their groups before beginning a whole-class discussion, or to allocate 1-2 of the questions to each group to discuss before proceeding.

- *What sorts of themes can you identify with relation to the notion of femininity or masculinity?*
- *What have you noticed about the language that is used to describe women, as opposed to the language that is used to describe men?*
- *Are there any terms that are used to describe young women that have a different meaning when applied to young men?*
- *Are there any categories where the class feels that young women are subject to more sexist stereotypes than young men?*
- *Are there any areas where the class feels that one gender has more power than the other as a result of sexist stereotypes?*
- *What might be the impact of stereotypes relating to how women and men are defined?*
- *How might this impact on young people who don't identify with the sex they were assigned at birth?*
- *How do the themes identified by the class relate to the experiences of individual students?*

5. Conclude the class with a reflection. Ask students to write down two things they have learned in the lesson about sexist stereotypes and then select a range of students to share their thoughts with the rest of the class.

# SEXISM

## A BASIC DEFINITION

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Sexism is prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination, *typically* against women, on the basis of sex or gender. Sexism also consists of the **attitudes, stereotypes**, and **systemic elements** that promote discrimination on the basis of sex or gender.

*For example:*

- A sexist **attitude** might be that one sex should be responsible for all of the cooking and cleaning in the domestic sphere
- A sexist **stereotype** might be that one sex is not as good at sport as the other
- A sexist **system** might be one where one sex is not paid as much as the other for doing the same work, with the same qualifications

The term 'Sexism' was coined in the 1960's during the Women's Liberation Movement.

Sexism often involves the creation and reinforcement of gender stereotypes, which are widely held beliefs about the assumed characteristics and behavior of women and men.

### WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF SEXISM?

- Not paying a person an equal wage, or offering them the same benefits as other employees, because of their sex or gender.
- Treating a person, often a woman, as a sexual object (objectification)
- Using offensive language or making offensive jokes based on someone's sex or gender
- Only allowing one sex to participate in certain activities
- Denying a person access to education because of their sex or gender
- Creating an environment where one gender feels unsafe or uncomfortable
- Not supporting girls' sports teams the same way support is given to boys sports teams.

# UNPACKING SEXIST LANGUAGE

## GROUP TIME

Individual and whole group  
90 minutes or 2 x 45 minutes

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will explore the notion of gendered stereotypes, particularly in relation to 'double standards' around the concept of sexual activity

Students will contemplate the impact of sexist language and sexist stereotypes, particularly in relation to young women

Students will gain an understanding of the way in which sexist language falls within a continuum of violence

Students will explore their own beliefs and attitudes towards sexist language

## BACKGROUND

This lesson is intended to encourage students to think about the 'everyday' use of sexist language and the everyday experience of sexist stereotyping, particularly with regard to sexuality. The lesson focuses on the way in which sexist language reinforces false 'truths' about gendered behaviour and the impact those 'truths' have on young people, particularly on young women. The lesson is intended as a continuation of Lesson One, Unit Three, but will also work as a stand-alone class.

## ACTIVITIES

1. Stereotype the story
2. Numbered Heads Together
3. #Hashtag Reflection

## PREPARATION & MATERIALS

- 1 x copy per student of the 'Stereotype the Story' handout
- 1 x copy per student of 'Exiting the Building: Exploring the Sexist Skyscraper'
- Envelope containing the letters of the alphabet (see below)
- 1 x teacher copy of 'Sexism: A Basic Definition'

## UNIT 3 / LESSON 2

### PROCEDURE

#### PART 1 : STEREOTYPE THE STORY

1. Give each student a copy of the 'Stereotype the Story' handout and ask them to fill in the gaps of the story with the first responses that come to mind. The story is structured to highlight stereotypes about young women's clothing choices and perceived sexual behavior.
2. Select a number of students to read out their responses to the rest of the class and ask the group to consider the following questions:

- *Who chose to use the pronoun 'she' when filling in the blanks in the story? Why did they choose to use it?*
- *Who chose to use the pronoun 'he' when filling in the blanks in the story? Why did they choose to use it?*
- *What sorts of stereotypes does this story highlight?*
- *Do you think that girls are more likely than boys to be subject to the kinds of attitudes expressed in the story? Why?*

If the intended stereotypes/themes of the story do not emerge in the discussion, ask students to think about:

- *Which groups of people are usually singled out for wearing 'really short' or revealing items of clothing?*
- *Which groups of people might regularly have their sexual activity questioned?*
- *Which group of people does the term 'asking for it' often apply to? In what context does it apply? Why?*

You may wish to refer to the 'Sexism: A Basic Definition' handout if the class requires clarification of the term. It may also assist with making links between the story, student responses to the story and the practice of sexism.

#### PART 2 : NUMBERED HEADS TOGETHER

1. Ensure that each student has a copy of *Exiting the Building: Exploring the Sexist Skyscraper*. Allow students time to read the article independently.
2. Organise students into teams of three to five, assigning each member in the group a number from one to five. Then assign each member of the group a letter

of the alphabet. Ensure that you have prepared an envelope with the letters of the alphabet in it for yourself. You will use this when eliciting student responses.

3. Inform students that they are going to be using a technique called 'Numbered Heads Together' to answer some questions about the article they have just read. This process of responding to the article requires everyone in the group to be able to answer the question, so working together to make sure everyone understands the group's answer is important.
4. Work your way through the questions below one by one, using the following process:
  - a. Provide the class with a question from the list.
  - b. Instruct each group to put their 'numbered heads together' to answer the question cooperatively. Give students time to think and to talk to each other about their answers.
  - c. After giving students some 'think time', call out a number from one to five. All students with that number stand up. Then select a letter from the envelope: the student who has both the number and the letter called then provides their group's response to the question. E.g. a student with a number one and the letter 'a' may be chosen to respond.
  - d. If the answer requires elaboration or corrections, another person standing can be called upon to give their group's answer.
  - e. If the question asked is open-ended, you might like to ask all students with the same number to contribute to the answer.

### Questions

- *What might the term 'gendered violence' mean?*
- *What might the term marginalisation mean? (Ask students to have a go at this question but clarify the term using the 'Useful Vocabulary' box below if required)*
- *What does the skyscraper symbolise in the article?*
- *What are some of the different levels or floors in the skyscraper? What happens as you get higher up in the 'building'?*
- *What is meant by the sentence: 'if you're visiting any of the levels of varying sexism, you're actually supporting a system that harms and abuses other people'? How might this harm occur?*

*Continued overleaf...*

- *What is meant by the sentence 'you might think [that words] are harmless, but they actually lay the groundwork for a lot of the more serious violence used against women'?*
- *In what ways can we 'walk out of' this symbolic building and 'refuse to ever go back in'? What might that look like or sound like?*

### PART 2 : NUMBERED HEADS TOGETHER

1. Ask students to compose a 140 character response to the article they have read and discussed, summarising either one thing they have learned from 'Exiting the Building: Exploring the Sexist Skyscraper', a main theme of the article or any questions the article may have raised.
2. Prompt students to share their response with the class.



# STEREOTYPE

## THE STORY

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My friends and I were at a party on the weekend and this \_\_\_\_\_ was wearing a really short \_\_\_\_\_ and a \_\_\_\_\_ top. \_\_\_\_\_ often comes to parties dressed like that and I don't have much \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ as a result. Both the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ think \_\_\_\_\_ a bit of a \_\_\_\_\_. One of the \_\_\_\_\_ at the party wolf whistled as \_\_\_\_\_ came in and \_\_\_\_\_ got really mad and said that \_\_\_\_\_ didn't have the \_\_\_\_\_ to do that. I thought \_\_\_\_\_ was being lame and couldn't take a joke so I yelled out "I'd have a piece of \_\_\_\_\_" and all of the \_\_\_\_\_ laughed. Because come on. I mean \_\_\_\_\_ obviously looking for attention if \_\_\_\_\_ was dressed like that! \_\_\_\_\_ must want \_\_\_\_\_ to look at \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ kind of \_\_\_\_\_ for it really. I've also heard that \_\_\_\_\_ around a bit and that everyone thinks \_\_\_\_\_ a bit 'easy'. Don't get me wrong: I think that \_\_\_\_\_ should be able to have a sex life too but they don't have the same needs as \_\_\_\_\_ anyway and I'd never consider someone like \_\_\_\_\_ as \_\_\_\_\_ material or as someone I'd introduce to \_\_\_\_\_. If \_\_\_\_\_ want to have \_\_\_\_\_ respect then I think that they should act in a more \_\_\_\_\_ way.

# STEREOTYPE

## THE STORY

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### EXAMPLE RESPONSE

My friends and I were at a party on the weekend and this GIRL was wearing a really short DRESS and a REVEALING top. SHE often comes to parties dressed like that and I don't have much RESPECT for HER as a result. Both the GUYS and the GIRLS think SHE'S a bit of a SLUT. One of the GUYS at the party wolf whistled as SHE came in and SHE got really mad and said that HE didn't have the RIGHT to do that. I thought SHE was being lame and couldn't take a joke, so I yelled out, "I'd have a piece of THAT" and all of the PEOPLE at the party laughed. Because, come on. I mean, SHE'S obviously looking for attention if SHE'S dressed like that! SHE must want GUYS to look at her. SHE'S kind of ASKING for it really. I've also heard that SHE SLEEPS around a bit and that everyone thinks SHE'S a bit 'easy'. Don't get me wrong: I think that GIRLS should be able to have a sex life too, but they don't have the same needs as GUYS anyway, and I'd never consider someone like HER as GIRLFRIEND material or as someone I'd introduce to MY PARENTS! If GIRLS want to be treated with more RESPECT then I think that they should act in a more LADYLIKE way.

# EXITING THE BUILDING

## EXPLORING THE SEXIST SKYSCRAPER

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People tend to think of gendered violence as a series of unrelated and individual incidents, things that happen outside of the bounds of society rather than right within it. But violence happens on a continuum, which means that it's all connected across a long line. Instead of thinking of sexist violence as random, it's actually more accurate to think of it like it's a skyscraper. The most inoffensive of sexism happens on the ground floor and the most heinous of violence and misogyny happens on the roof.

Now, in real life you can't just jump straight to the roof of a skyscraper, right? You have to pass through multiple floors in order to get there. It's the same with the idea of a skyscraper here. The layers or levels of sexism - which includes the use of gendered insults and abuse - actually creates the structure that supports the level holding the worst of the violence. You might not be heading to the top of the building, but if you're visiting any of the levels of varying sexism, you're actually supporting a system that harms and abuses other people.

So what do some of these levels look like? Well, at the very bottom we have things like the marginalisation of women in pop culture, politics and the media - basically, what's called the 'symbolic annihilation' of a group of people who make up 51% of the population but who are represented in percentages much lower than this. In the building above this, we have things like sexist stereotypes and casually sexist language. Next, we encounter abusive behaviour including physical and emotional incidents of violence. Even further up we find sexual violence and rape culture. And then right at the top we have what people like to think of as the really scary stuff - the kind of vicious misogyny which results in one woman being murdered by a partner or ex-partner every week in Australia.

Here's the interesting thing - without all those other levels creating the structure of the building, it would be really difficult to get to that top floor. This is what the continuum of violence looks like. In this lesson, we're looking at how sexist language fits into that.

By this stage, you're probably familiar with some of the different sexist stereotypes that reinforce gender inequality. Some of these stereotypes are obvious, like the ones which celebrate boys for their sexual exploits while shaming girls for the same thing. Others can be a bit more subtle, like the idea that hair on a girl's body is disgusting while hair on a boy's body is natural.

## UNIT 3 / LESSON 2

### EXITING THE BUILDING

But once you start identifying sexist stereotypes, it becomes a lot more difficult to ignore them. As critical thinkers, it's important that you be invested in understanding how and why the world works as it does - and it's important that you question whether or not these things are 'natural' or 'unchangeable', or if they're designed in a way that discriminates against people and our ability to express ourselves freely.

Language is the subtle-but-equally-as-important flipside of this. We can often be thoughtless about the language we use, but our words have the power to hurt other people. Worse, using sexist language creates and reinforces gender inequality. You might think that something's 'just a joke' or 'meaningless', but it's more than likely neither of those things to the person whose feelings are hurt because of what you're saying. Words have just as much power to be violent and oppressive as actions do, and when we think of them as fitting into that structure of violence, it becomes even clearer how damaging that sexist language is.

Boys can be affected by sexist language too, but it's more often than not girls who either bear the brunt of this kind of violence or whose very personhood is used as the butt of a joke.

Consider how some of the following words might be used to target girls in particular:

- Bitch
- Whore
- Slut
- Skank
- Ho
- Frigid

These are all words that are used to discredit girls. They work by using society's own sexist stereotypes about what girls should be - nice, polite, compliant, sexually conservative - and they punish girls by accusing them of not being those things. They are more often than not paired with other words and ideas about things girls are meant to aspire to - to have the 'perfect body', to be perfectly attractive, easy going, unchallenging and, ultimately, to conform to all of these ideas.

Girls, you'll encounter enough people who want to abuse you like this so think about how that makes you feel before you do it to other girls. And boys, before you use language like this, think about how you'd feel if someone targeted you with words specifically designed to make you feel like you're less than human. If you still need convincing, think about how you'd feel if you heard someone call your mother a slut or a bitch or a whore.

## UNIT 3 / LESSON 2

### EXITING THE BUILDING

Not very nice, is it?

How do we know these words are used to target girls? A good test is to check whether certain words would typically be used against boys. Can you imagine a boy being called a bitch or a slut? The answer is probably no. Most of the words used to abuse women relate to their bodies, their appearance or their sexuality. You might think they're harmless, but they actually lay the groundwork for a lot of the more serious violence used against women.

Remember that skyscraper? Well, sexist language takes up a whole floor in that building. So when you use it, you're actually helping to support a structure which allows for a whole mess of much more serious violence to be perpetrated against women. You are complicit in a system which helps to maintain the gender inequality that harms both women and men. And the only way to really get out of that is to just walk right on out of the building and refuse to ever go back in.

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# CHALLENGING GENDER NORMS

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**GROUP TIME**

Whole group, pairs, small group/s  
60-90 minutes or 2 x 45 minutes

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students will think about how they became aware of the expectations attached to the gender they personally identify with

Students will think critically about the stereotypes associated with the notions of femininity and masculinity

Students will explore the link between sexist stereotypes and sexist language

**BACKGROUND**

This class is intended to enable students to think critically about the way in which entrenched beliefs about gender roles appear to be 'natural', and to challenge the connection between taken-for-granted understandings of 'femininity' and 'masculinity' and the normalisation of sexist language (that is, the way in which practices like catcalling may be portrayed as simply 'boys being boys' or that women experiencing catcalling should accept the practice as a 'compliment').

**ACTIVITIES**

1. A-gender check
2. Give One To Get One
3. Five Whys

**PREPARATION & MATERIALS**

- 1 x Give One to Get One handout per student
- Sexism: A Basic Definition
- Sex/Gender definitions
- 1 x 'Agenda-check' handout per student (or a teacher copy, from which the questions can be read)

### PROCEDURE

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#### PART 1 : A-GENDER CHECK

1. Initiate a class discussion using the questions from the 'A-gender check' handout. **Encourage students to think about whether their perception of their gender (and the ways in which the gender they identify with should 'behave') is informed by what they think is "natural".** Ideas may be recorded on the board if you wish.

#### PART 2 : GIVE TO GET ONE

1. Ensure that all students have a copy of the 'Give One To Get One' handout.
2. Explain that the 'Give One To Get One' strategy consists of three parts:
  - a. Each student recording three of their own ideas on the handout provided
  - b. Exchanging ideas with other students
  - c. Working in pairs or small groups to review ideas gained from interacting with peers
3. Allow students some time to think about the prompts on the handout and to write three responses in the boxes provided. Try to ensure that not all students fill in the same three boxes. You could manage this by allocating the first three rows on the handout to one part of the room, the second three rows to another part of the room, and so on.
4. Once individual responses have been recorded, ask students to move around the room talking to their peers, with the purpose of giving and receiving ideas. Students should give an idea from their worksheet, the person they are talking to should record it, and then they should reverse roles. Students get only one idea from each partner and each recorded idea must be different. Encourage students to exchange ideas broadly and with students who are not sitting at their table or whom they would not normally work with.
5. After students have exchanged ideas, allow each table some time to discuss their ideas in small groups. They can share ideas found to be most helpful, unique, frustrating, thought provoking or interesting. If students did not fill in each box on their grid, they can be given time to complete their sheet during this step.
6. Conclude with a whole group discussion of the ideas generated by the class, focusing on the way in which sexist stereotypes about the bodies or behavior of each gender may have come into play.



The 'Cat Calling' statement works well in this activity because it assists students to think about the way in which sexist language and sexist practices are presented as 'complimentary' or as 'normal' 'masculine' responses to women's physical appearances, and to examine the different responses women may have to catcalling - and the reasons behind those responses.

## PART 3 : CHALLENGING THE STATUS QUO

1. Facilitate a discussion about what is 'normal' with regard to gender roles using the 'Five Whys' process outline below and the statement: 'Cat calling or wolf whistling is a natural thing for a guy to do'.

The purpose of the discussion is to encourage students to think critically about the gender stereotypes they may take for granted, and to think deeply about learned behaviours that are considered to be 'feminine' or 'masculine': they should also begin to think about what an alternative expression of gender roles might look or sound like.

2. Conclude the discussion by asking a small selection of students to volunteer a response to the following question:

- *What is the link between stereotypical ideas about what it means to be masculine or feminine, and language or behaviour that could be considered to be sexist? How does one inform the other?*

E.G. The stereotype that having a high sex drive is masculine - not feminine - may lead to the labeling of boys who have a high sex drive a 'studs' and girls who have a high sex drive a 'sluts'.

## THE FIVE WHYS

The 5 Whys is a thinking tool that is very easy to use. Begin with a statement and then keep asking the question "why?" until your students begin to think about the underlying issues related to the statement. Discourage simplistic answers, instead asking students to think more deeply and laterally as they go along. It may take a few practices.

**Example Statement: Girls should shave their underarms**

- Why? Because it looks gross when girls have hairy armpits*
- Why? Because having hairy armpits is not very feminine*
- Why? Because being feminine means being hairless and smooth*
- Why? Because we have **learned** that this is the case, maybe from our parents, or from our peers or from the media*
- Why? Because there are different (or double) standards applied to the way that the bodies of girls' and the bodies of boys' should look.*

**Consider:** *If both sexes are born with underarm hair, why are only girls required to remove it?*

# THE A-GENDER CHECKLIST

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1. What's the very first thing you remember? How old were you and what were you doing?
2. Did it matter that you were perceived as a little girl or a little boy, or do you think that, at that point, you were actually aware of yourself as having a gender?
3. Can you remember the first time you thought of yourself as having a gender?
4. Can you remember the first time someone treated you in a way that was obviously related to how they perceived your gender?
5. Can you remember little girls or little boys who didn't seem to hang out with others of the same gender or didn't always act in ways thought to be "appropriate" to their gender? How did other kids and adults treat those children?
6. What lessons did adults seem to teach you about gender?
7. What are other ways in which you learned about gender as a child?
8. Has the shape and form that gender takes in your life changed over the course of your life? It might be helpful to think about your childhood experience of gender as opposed to your teenage years.

## UNIT 3 / LESSON 3

# GIVE ONE TO GET ONE

### ACTIVITY

I think that women's underarm hair is...	When I see a man with his shirt off I think...	I think that 'cat-calling' or wolf whistling is...
One thing I wonder about the use of the word 'slut' is...	If someone told me that girls naturally make good nurses, I would say...	When it comes to the idea of 'sleeping around' one interesting question I have is...
If someone told me that boys know more about cars I'd say...	When I imagine what a mathematician looks like I picture...	When I see a woman with her shirt off I think...

# SEXISM STINGS

## 'SLUT' AS A GENDERED INSULT

### GROUP TIME

Whole group  
90 minutes or 2 x 45 minutes

#### LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will undertake  
a critical analysis of a  
visual image

Students will formulate  
and reflect upon critical  
questions using the  
'F.I.R.E' strategy

Students will reflect upon  
the use of the word 'slut'  
and the impact it has  
on those the word is  
used to 'brand'

#### BACKGROUND

Though it may also be used as a stand-alone class, this lesson is intended to build on the understandings of 'sexist stereotypes' explored in Lesson Three, Unit Three. The purpose of the lesson is to encourage students to examine the gendered use of the word 'slut' – that is, the disproportionate use of the term to describe young women. Students are encouraged to think about the impact the use of the word has on young women and the different implications it may have for young men. The Fitzroy High School Feminist Collective's 'Sexism Stings' poster and Femco video about the word slut will both be used as stimulus in the class.

#### ACTIVITIES

1. Visual Analysis of 'Sexism Stings'
2. Video analysis and F.I.R.E activity

#### PREPARATION & MATERIALS

- Either 1 x colour copy per table or a digitally projected image of the poster *Sexism Stings*, or an upload of the image to your class page.
- Internet access for screening Femco video about the word slut (AV required)
- *F.I.R.E strategy* handout

## PROCEDURE

## PART 1

1. Ensure that all students in the class are able to clearly view see the 'Sexism Stings' poster. You may want to consider giving each table a colour copy of the poster, using a screen that the whole class can see, projecting the image onto the board or wall, or posting it on your class page.
2. Give students some time to look at the poster carefully, and then consider the following questions as a whole group. You may wish to give students a chance to write down some responses before beginning the discussion:

- *What is the first thing that you notice about the poster?*
- *Why might the young woman in the poster have the word 'slut' stenciled across her face? What might the writing on her face symbolise?*
- *What sort of expression does the young women have on her face, and why?*
- *What might the heading or 'tagline' refer to? Why was this heading/tagline chosen?*
- *What is the connection between the tagline of the poster and its image?*
- *Who is the poster targeting?*
- *What overarching message/s is the poster trying to communicate?*

## PART 2

1. Inform students that they are going to be using the 'F.I.R.E strategy' to assist them with reflecting on a clip they are about to watch. Explain what each letter in the F.I.R.E acronym stands for.

- F** **Formulate** a question that requires critical thinking (provided)
- I** **Internalise** the question by taking some quiet time to think about what the question is asking. Use a 'facial expression' emoticon to record initial response to the question. (E.g. 'Confused' face).
- R** **Record** your thinking by clearly writing down your response/s
- E** **Exchange** ideas with a partner or with your class group. Write notes in the 'Exchange' column recording other ideas that you find interesting or challenging.

2. Show students the Fitzroy High School Feminist Collective video which can be accessed via the resources tab at [www.fhsfemco.com](http://www.fhsfemco.com)
3. Ask students to write the question below (or a similar question of your choice) into the 'formulate' column of the F.I.R.E table. The purpose of the question is to prompt students to reflect deeply on the ideas presented in the video, with a deliberate focus on the gendered use of the word 'slut'.

*How does the use of the word 'slut' disproportionately affect the lives of young women?*

4. Work through each step of the F.I.R.E strategy with the class, allowing time between each step for the appropriate column to be completed.
5. When you get to the 'Exchange' column, discuss and conclude the class by reflecting on the ideas recorded by the class as a whole group.

Further prompts are suggested below if the discussion needs some help to get going.

- **Who** gets called a 'slut' most frequently?
- **Why** is the word 'slut' used to describe them?
- What are the affects of using the word slut to describe young women?
- **How often** do young women get called sluts? How does that make them feel?
- Do you feel that young women are limited in any way because they fear being called a slut? Is this a problem for young women? Why?
- Why do you think the students in the video want other teenagers to think twice about their use of the word slut?
- What is the **most important thing** the students in the video want you to know about the use of the word slut?
- What can **you** do about the use of the word?

# SEXISM STINGS

## FIGHT BACK.

#FHSFightBack



[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/USERNAME](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/USERNAME)



[WWW.TWITTER.COM/USERNAME](http://WWW.TWITTER.COM/USERNAME)



[WWW.FITZROYHS.VIC.EDU.AU](http://WWW.FITZROYHS.VIC.EDU.AU)



GOOD  
HOOD

[WWW.OURGOODHOOD.COM.AU](http://WWW.OURGOODHOOD.COM.AU)

UNIT 3 / LESSON 4

# F.I.R.E

[illegible]



# FIGHTING BACK

## GROUP TIME

Whole and Pairs  
60-90 minutes or 2 x 45 minutes

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will explore the idea that sexism is an 'everyday' occurrence and work collaboratively to devise practical strategies to address it

Students will be able to devise a response to a visual stimulus using a 'paired exchange' strategy

## BACKGROUND

This lesson is intended to create a space for students to explore the question of how to respond to the use of sexist language and to create some strategies for dealing with both in-person and on-line experiences of sexism. It will work most effectively when it is used as a follow-up to Lessons 1-4 in Unit Three, as those classes introduce students to the concept of sexist language.

## ACTIVITIES

1. Screening: Laura Bates 'Everyday Sexism' TEDx Talk<sup>1</sup>
2. Paired Exchange
3. Old School Brainstorm

## PREPARATION & MATERIALS

- AVI equipment for screening digital content (or student access to the web, plus a class set of headphones if you wish students to view the clip individually)
- 1 x copy *Sexism: A Basic definition*
- Teacher access to a timing device
- A3 paper for group brainstorm activity

### PROCEDURE

#### PART 1 : RECAP & SCREENING

1. Begin by reminding students of the definition of sexism (see handout) and if appropriate, by quickly recapping the themes of class discussions from Unit 3, Lessons 3-4 about the normalisation of sexist language and the use of the word 'slut'. Write the following question up on the board so that students may keep it in mind whilst watching the stimulus material for this class:

*"How can we **fight back** against the use of sexist language?"*

2. Inform students that they are going to watch an example of how a British woman, Laura Bates, decided to fight back against 'Everyday Sexism'. Screen the Tedx Talk 'Everyday Sexism: Laura Bates' (16:05)<sup>2</sup>. Ask students to take notes about the key ideas presented in the talk.

#### PART 2 : PAIRED EXCHANGE

1. Ask students to select a partner and to assign each partner either number 1 or number 2. Whilst students are organising their partner, write the following questions on the board (or if you have a class page, post them up on there):

- *What is 'Everyday Sexism,' according to Laura Bates?*
- *What do you think about the experiences Bates describes herself and other women having?*
- *How did Laura Bates address the issue of 'Everyday Sexism' and what were some of the outcomes?*

2. Inform students that they will each have two quick, uninterrupted, 90-second 'rounds' to respond to the questions on the board, whilst their partner listens to their response. Partners must listen carefully so as not to repeat ideas. Have a timer ready, and ask each pair to nominate who will speak first. Then allow 90 seconds for the first 'round' and 90 seconds for the second 'round', alternating between speakers.

Make sure that you keep time so that students can focus on their conversation, and ensure that you indicate when 90 seconds has elapsed so that each pair may swap speakers. Each speaker should have two chances to speak.

### EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Give students the opportunity to make posters that outline their strategies for dealing with sexist language, which can be displayed in the school or classroom environment. Use the posters created by the **Fitzroy High School Feminist Collective** (included in this resource) as examples.
2. Provide students with time to make a zine about the use of sexist language, including the strategies for how to deal with specific scenarios.
3. Encourage students to write an article for the school newsletter outlining strategies for dealing with sexist language.

### PROCEDUREcont

### PART 3 : FIGHTING BACK

1. Organise students into groups of 4 or 5. Write the following list of sexist behaviours on the board (or have it posted to your class page). *It's important to allow students to add their own examples of sexist behavior to the list.*
  - Catcalling
  - Being called a 'slut'
  - Having one's body or appearance commented upon
  - Being told that you do something 'like a girl'
  - Being overlooked for a heavy job because you're 'not strong enough'
  - Being referred to as 'that' or 'it' instead of 'she' or 'her'
  - Experiencing language that stereotypes the characteristics of the gender you identify with
  - Any other examples provided by the class
2. Ask each group to choose one scenario from the list (or come up with an approved scenario of their own) and to brainstorm some practical responses that could be made 'on the spot' in that particular situation, or to address the issue in a broader context. Ideas must be written down.

Emphasise that many of these behaviours will occur not just during face-to-face interactions, but also in the digital realm.

*Some suggestions that might arise are:*

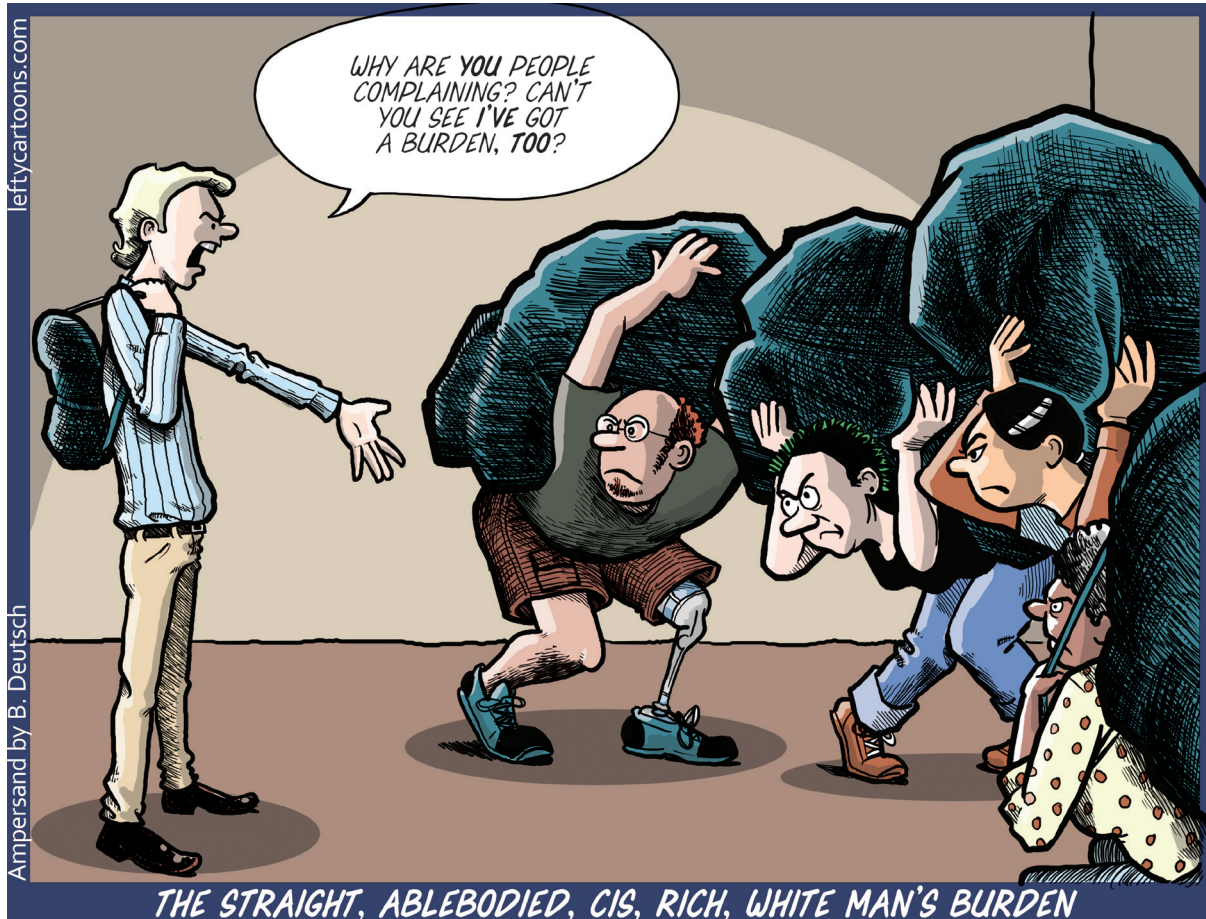
- Rather than getting involved in an online 'argument' post a link to an informative article about the issue in question in the digital realm
  - Make a point of not laughing at sexist jokes
  - Make a point of not using sexist language
  - Pointing out to others that their language is sexist
  - Start a school feminist collective so that people have a space to talk about and take action against sexism (refer to the **How To Start A Feminist Collective** video on the resources tab at <http://fhsfemco.com/>)
  - Ask teachers to address the issue at school
3. Allow time for the groups to share their suggestions with each other and to discuss and provide feedback on each other's ideas. You may wish to put the A3 pieces of paper from each group up in your classroom.

1 Everyday Sexism: Laura Bates at TEDxCoventGardenWomen, Copyright: TED: Jan 17, 2014.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LhjsRjC6B8U>

2 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LhjsRjC6B8U>

# REVERSE SEXISM



Imagine the following situation.

It is winter, and there are two people standing on a beach. One person is wearing a thick wet suit and the other person is wearing light summer clothes. If someone were to throw a bucket of icy cold water at the person wearing the wet suit, they would be protected from the effect of that water (both its wetness and its coldness) by the insulation the wet suit offers them. If someone were to throw the same bucket of icy cold water at the person wearing light summer clothes, they would feel the effect of the water much more profoundly: they would get much wetter and feel much colder. They would experience an effect that it is impossible for the person in the wet suit to feel.

Now think of the icy cold water as representing *sexism*.

## UNIT 3 / LESSON 5

### REVERSE SEXISM

The **systems** that exist in our culture act like a **wetsuit** for men: they protect them from the water. This means that there are systems that enable men to be paid more than women, to be represented in much higher numbers in parliament and as CEO's of companies than women, to suffer less violence and sexual assault than women, and to be recognised far more regularly for their sporting and professional endeavours than women.

Women do not have the same protective wet suits. For women those same **systems** are like a set of **light summer clothes**: they expose them to the water. Systemic sexism prevents women from being paid equally or entering politics in the same numbers (via policies, attitudes and prejudices), causes women to be vulnerable to increased violence and sexual assault (via a legal system that many argue does not adequately punish those offences, and a culture that encourages the objectification of women) and makes it difficult for women to be adequately recognised for their sporting and professional endeavours (via things like the historical privileging of broadcasting men's sport over women's or a lack of promotion of women into professional roles that enable recognition in equal numbers).

It's not that the person in the wet suit can't feel the water – it might splash onto a foot or a hand in the form of gender stereotypes for example – but that they are unable to feel it in the same way as the person who is not protected by the wetsuit. No matter how much cold water is thrown at the wet-suited person (say in the form of a sexist joke or stereotype) they are not able to experience the same effect as the person in light summer clothes.

The concept of 'reverse sexism' is misleading for that reason: much like the cartoon above, where the heavy bags represent systemic discrimination, the person wearing the wetsuit does not carry the same 'burden' as the person who is wearing the light summer clothes, and therefore cannot experience the same level of inequality.

## UNIT 3 / LESSON 5

# VIOLENCE AGAINST MEN

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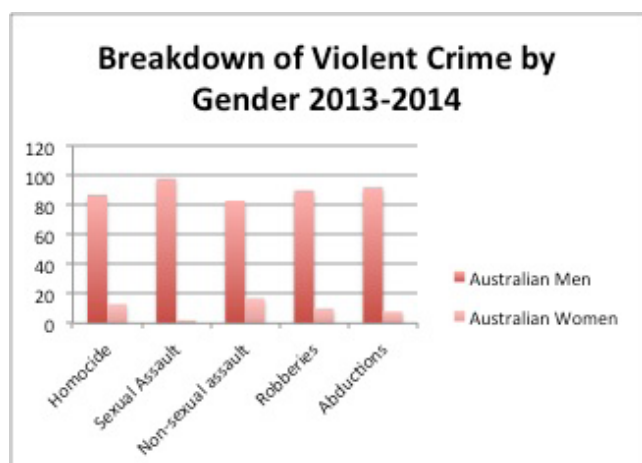
### Consider this analogy.

A three-leaf clover has been given its name because it almost always has three leaves. Very occasionally, you might see a four-leaf clover (it has been estimated that there are approximately 10,000 three-leaf clovers for every four-leaf clover that exists). The existence of four-leaf clovers does not lead us to think that we should call the plant a 'clover' to include both of its variations, or to focus our attention on the very rare instances when we find a four-leaf clover, because it is obvious that on the whole the plant does in fact have three leaves. If I say, 'wow, look at this field of amazing 3-leaf clovers' it's unlikely that anyone is going to loudly protest, 'but what about the four leaf clovers?' because they are in fact a rarity. Right?

Now, think about violence against men in the same way. Although on rare occasions there will be instances where violence is committed against a man by a woman – and this should be taken as seriously as any other act of violence – it is a rare occurrence, and it shouldn't change the focus on the core of the problem, the 'three leaves' if you like: men's violence against women and against other men. The statistics simply don't support the claim that the issue of violence against men by women is a common problem.

In fact the crime statistics released by Victoria Police for 2013/14 tell us the following:

- 87% of homicides were committed by men.
- 98% of sexual assaults were committed by men.
- 83% of non-sexual assaults were committed by men.
- 90% of robberies were committed by men.
- 92% of abductions were committed by men.
- 94% of rape victims are women
- 84% of the victims of other sexual crime victims are women



## UNIT 3 / LESSON 5

### VIOLENCE AGAINST MEN

This information should not lead us to take violence against men less seriously. However, it should lead us to think about where the focus of discussions about combatting violence should lie, given that men are the perpetrators of the majority of violence against both women and other men. Whilst it is true that ‘not all men’ commit violence against women, it is equally true that a majority of women will be affected by the sexism that underpins these high levels of violent offending.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/YesAllWomen>; <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NotAllMen>

# APPENDIX

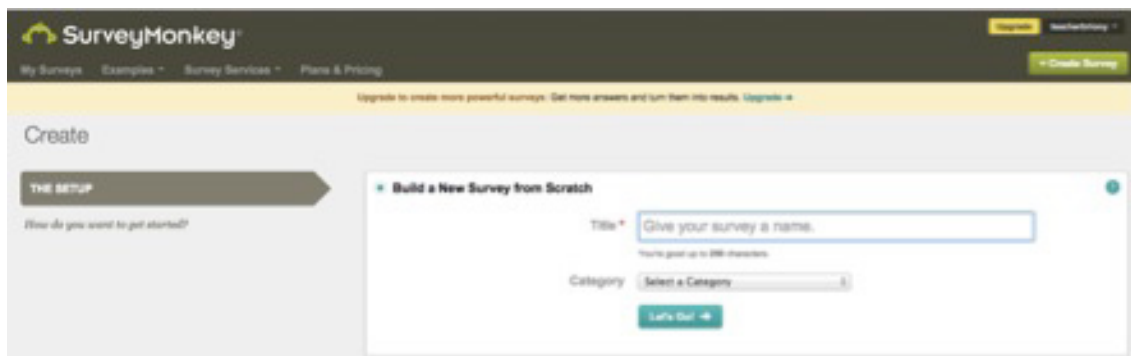
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## SurveyMonkey®

### Unit 2: Lesson Three - Objectification in Practice

An example of how 'SurveyMonkey®' might be used to set up an interactive, online survey for recording and displaying student responses.

1. Name and categorise your survey.  
E.g. Title: 'Checking in on Objectification'  
Category: Education.



The screenshot shows the SurveyMonkey 'Create' page. On the left, there's a sidebar with 'THE SETUP' and a question 'How do you want to get started?'. The main area is titled 'Build a New Survey from Scratch'. It contains a 'Title' field with the placeholder 'Give your survey a name.' and a note 'Titles go up to 250 characters'. Below the title field is a 'Category' dropdown menu with the text 'Select a Category'. At the bottom of the form is a green 'Let's Go!' button.

2. Create the questions. E.g.



The screenshot shows a SurveyMonkey survey titled 'Checking In On Objectification'. Below the title is a blue bar with the text '+ Add Page Title'. The survey contains two questions:

1. What is the sex of the person being depicted in the TASTY FOOTBALL AD?  
☐ Female  
☐ Male  
☐ Both
2. Which of the following labels apply to those being depicted?  
☐ Active  
☐ Passive  
☐ Sexualised  
☐ Not sexualised  
☐ Depicted as an object  
☐ Not depicted as an object

At the bottom of the survey is a grey 'Done' button.

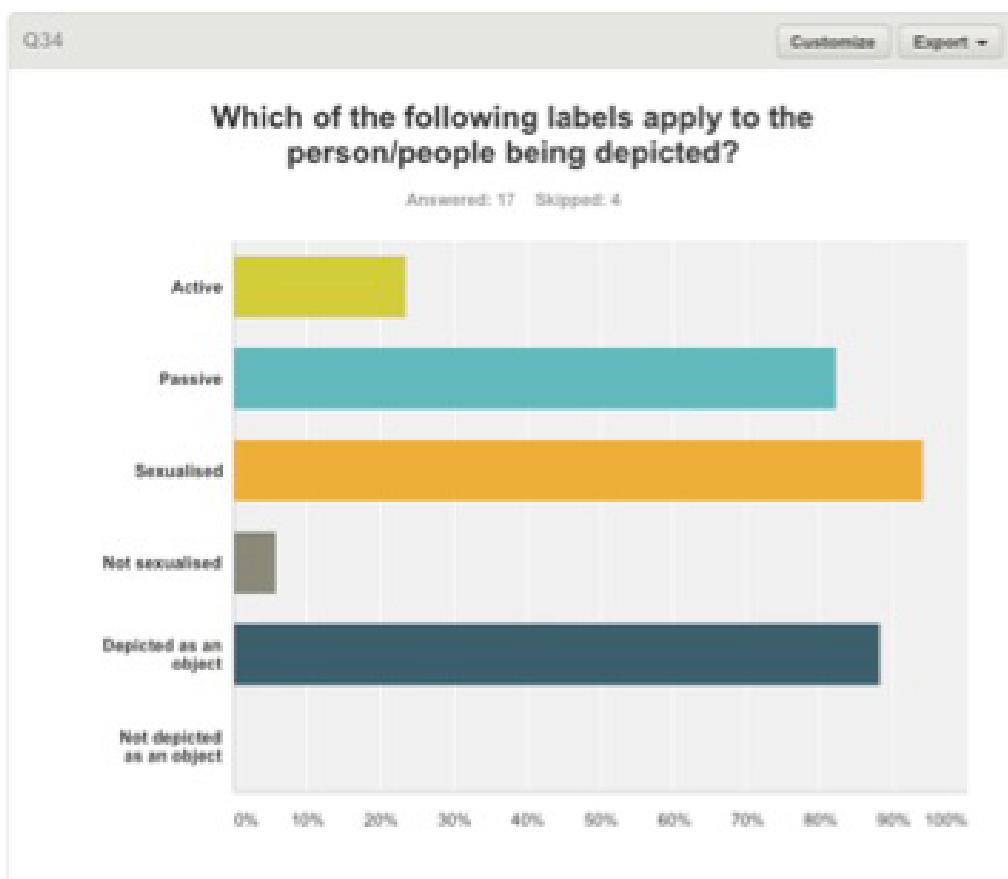


## APPENDIX

### 3. Viewing a breakdown of student responses

Answer Choices	Responses	
Active	20.00%	4
Passive	70.00%	14
Sexualised	90.00%	18
Not sexualised	0.00%	0
Depicted as an object	85.00%	17
Not depicted as an object	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 20		

### 4. Visual representation of student responses



## NATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

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### Violence and Sexual Assault

#### **Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence National Help Line**

24 hour phone: 1800 RESPECT

[www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au)

1800 Respect (1800 737 732)

#### **The Women's Services Network (WESNET)**

[wesnet.org.au](http://wesnet.org.au)

#### **Men's Referral Service**

1300 766 491

### Sexuality

#### **Rainbow Network**

<http://www.rainbownetwork.com.au/>

### Eating Disorders

#### **Butterfly National Support Line and Web Counselling Service**

[www.thebutterflyfoundation.org.au/web-counselling](http://www.thebutterflyfoundation.org.au/web-counselling)

1800 ED HOPE / 1800 33 4673

### General Support Services

#### **Headspace**

<http://www.headspace.org.au/>

#### **Eheadspace**

<https://www.eheadspace.org.au/>

#### **Lifeline Australia**

13 11 14

#### **Kids Helpline**

1800 55 1800

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