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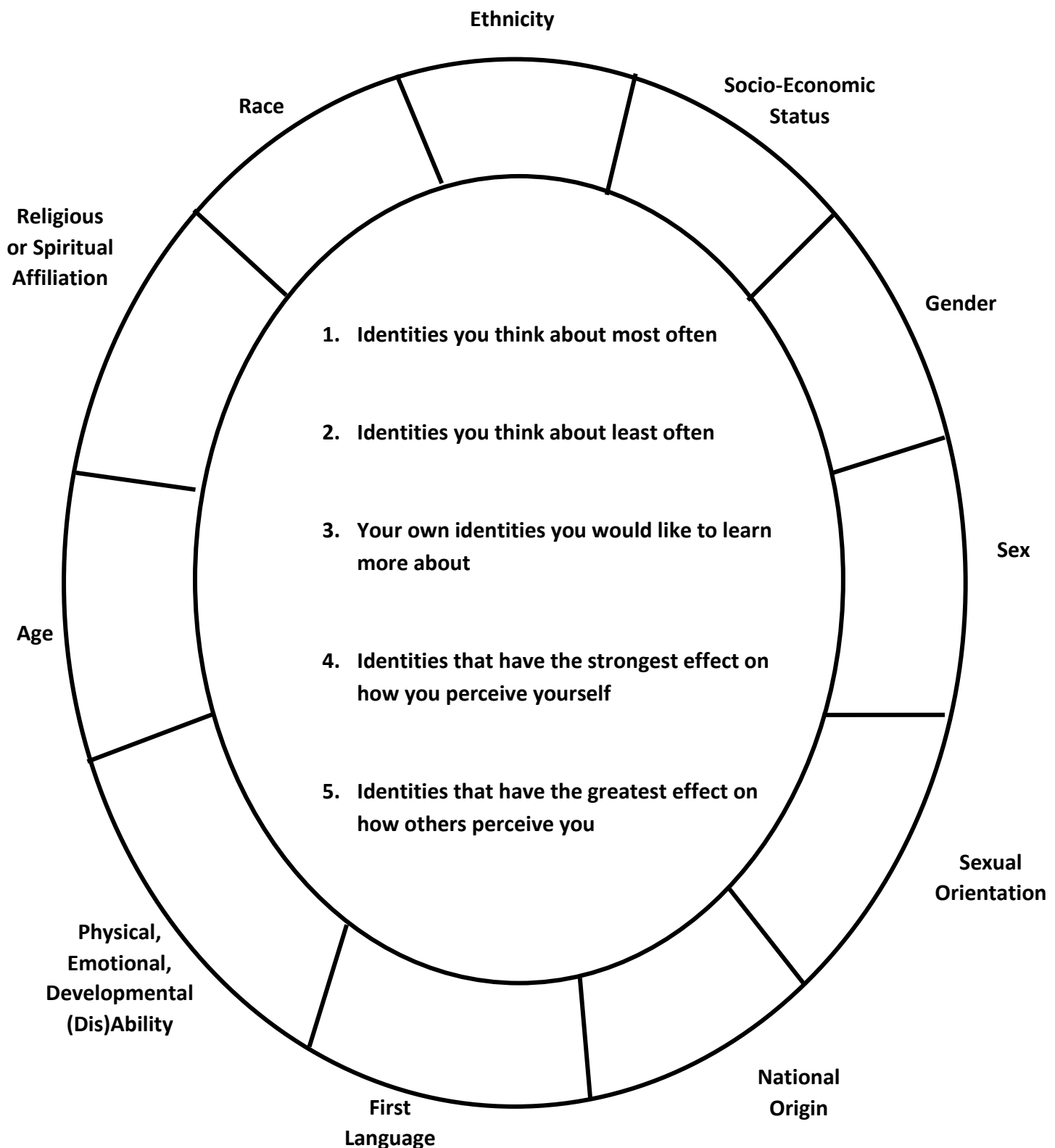
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READY WILLING & ELECTABLE:

Women Running for Executive Office



When it comes to women serving in executive office, there is still more work to do. Only 18% of our current governors are women, and twenty states have never had a woman governor. In the entire history of the United States, only forty-four women have served as governor. The numbers are even worse when it comes to women of color and LGBTQ women.

Barbara Lee Family Foundation research shows that when running for executive office, women face obstacles that men running simply do not. **This research, which asks about hypothetical Asian Pacific Islander American, Black, Latina, lesbian, and white women candidates of the two major political parties, comprehensively examines what it takes for a woman to prove to voters she is ready to serve in executive office.** What we found is good news for women:

KEY FINDINGS

- **The idea that women candidates aren't as electable as their male counterparts is a myth.** Across candidate profiles tested, all of the women tested won or tied their head-to-head ballots against a straight white man of the opposite party.
- **Double standards exist for women candidates – and voters know it.** Voters acknowledge that women are held to different and higher standards when it comes to qualifications and likeability, but many still actively participated in upholding those double standards.
- **It's still all about the economy.** Building private-public partnerships to create jobs and new businesses, having a written economic plan endorsed by businesses and labor, bringing state funding to the community, and being a business owner who created jobs and balanced budgets are all ways to convey that a woman candidate is very qualified and very likeable.
- **For women candidates, electability is about being action-oriented.** Across candidate profiles tested, the top leadership traits voters think are important for a woman to be elected to executive office are "can handle a crisis" and "gets results."
- **No matter the woman candidate they were asked about, a majority of voters say that candidate would represent their community well.** The majority of voters thought all of the women candidates tested were qualified. A woman's party affiliation, race, and sexual orientation influence what voters believe would make her seem likeable, more so than with her qualifications.

THANK YOU TO OUR RESEARCH PARTNERS:



goop

Are You Subtly Sexist? (Most Likely, Yes.)

But I'm not sexist, we all think. As journalist and author of *Feminist Fight Club* (an unexpectedly wry and funny guide to navigating sexism in the workplace) [Jessica Bennett](#)'s fascinating work shows, we—women and men—exhibit subtle sexist biases, many of which have disastrous consequences at work and elsewhere.

In the same way that cutting out, say, processed food long-term has much more significant effects on your health but is much less sexy/exciting/memorable than a one-time crash diet, the power of the subtle and the constant is easy to underestimate. With overt sexism (sadly and shockingly) still very present today, it's tempting to downplay the damage subtle sexism is still doing, day in and day out.

Subtle biases are, by definition, harder to pinpoint and to wipe out. With her trademark wit, Bennett details the subtle sexism to watch for in ourselves and one another, and the vitally important steps that you can take to deal with subtly sexist thoughts and behaviors in the moment. She also gives bigger-picture advice on how each of us can more fully support all women. (To Bennett's required feminist reading list—see below—we add her book, named after the feminist fight club she started years ago with a group of women in a NYC apartment. Her tribe has since grown; you can join it [here](#) and follow along on Instagram [here](#).)

A Q&A with Jessica Bennett

Q

How do you define subtle sexism?

A

Subtle sexism (n.)

The kind of sexism that makes you wonder, Am I actually just crazy? (No, you are not.)

While overt sexism is inarguably bad and inexcusable, that doesn't mean subtle sexism isn't damaging—oftentimes it's even more dangerous because it's harder to document, and even harder to call out. It's things like being interrupted when you speak—something that happens [twice as frequently](#) to women as men—or being mistaken for the office secretary when you're actually the one in charge. It's the fact that women who lead are perceived as bossy or too aggressive, that when we [negotiate for money](#) we're disliked (and [less likely](#) to receive said money), and when we ask for something twice we're viewed as nags. Subtle sexism shows up in the way people of all age groups and genders just didn't "like" Hillary Clinton (fact: [The more](#)

[power women gain](#), the less we like them, while the opposite is true for men), to the way, more recently, Elizabeth Warren was scolded for “persisting” and speaking up on the Senate floor.

Q

Is it possible to quantify its impact?

A

Taken individually, these things may not seem like that big a deal. But that’s in part what makes them so damaging: They’re insidious, and yet they’re easy to brush off. I call it “death by 1,000 cuts.” These things aren’t prosecutable in court, they’re typically not illegal, and yet they impact huge swaths of our working world, from the leadership roles women (do not) attain to how much money we make.

Q

Can you give us a few examples of subtle sexism in the workplace that you see often/find particularly problematic? What’s the appropriate response?

A



Illustration by Saskia Wariner

Subtle sexism can be internalized, too. I just wrote a book, for example, which means that people are constantly congratulating me on having written a book. But you know what I do? Instead of saying, “Thank you,” I deflect: “Oh, I couldn’t have done it without my editor, my research assistant, my boyfriend who supported me, my dog”—literally any possible human or nonhuman who may deserve an iota of credit, I am naming. Why? At first I didn’t know, but when I thought about it, I realized I didn’t want to come off as braggy or self-promotional. Again, why? Well, because we don’t like women who are self-promotional—and all sorts of academic research backs this up. So in this case, the appropriate response is to tell my internal voice to STFU and say, “Thank you,” but these things extend to all sorts of scenarios, from women feeling competitive against one another for no good reason, to

the fact that women’s ideas are very often attributed to men:

THE MANTERRUPTER

That’s the guy (or gal) who interrupts you when you speak—which, again, happens twice as frequently to women as it does to men, and even more if you’re a woman of color.

What you can do:

- Employ verbal chicken: Just keep talking and do not retreat until the other person shuts up.

- Lean in (literally): Physically lean into the table, if there is one. [Research](#) has shown this makes people less likely to be interrupted—conceivably because you’re asserting your authority through your body language.
- Interrupt the interrupter, and encourage your colleagues to do the same. If you see someone else being interrupted, chime in on their behalf: “Hey, can you let Jess finish?”

THE BROPROPRIATOR

The bropropriator appropriates credit for another’s work: presenting the ideas of his team as his own, accepting credit for an idea that wasn’t his, or sometimes doing nothing at all and still ending up with the credit. (Yes, research shows that women are less likely to have their own [ideas correctly attributed](#) to them, whether somebody is purposely taking credit for our ideas or not. Sometimes that credit is simply assumed to belong elsewhere.)

What you can do:

- Employ the “Thank n’ Yank,” in which you yank the credit back by thanking the person for liking your idea: “Thanks so much for picking up on my idea!” You’re being nice, but the key word is “my”: *my* idea.
- Amplify the ideas of your female colleagues. This is what the women of the Obama White House did when they felt they weren’t being heard in meetings. They’d commit beforehand to having one another’s backs, then walk into the meeting and make sure they repeated one another’s ideas—always with credit to the authors. Not only were they less likely to be interrupted, but their ideas were always attached to their rightful owner. Both the amplifier (who came off like a great colleague) and the person she was amplifying (who got her rightful credit) came out on top.

THE WOMENEMY

She who views other women as the competition, and undercuts them as a result. Of course, none of us has ever been that person, and yet behold: Research has found that [95 percent](#) of working women have felt undermined by another woman at least once in their careers, which means that most of us have met this woman or been her.

What you can do:

- Rule Number Three of the Feminist Fight Club (FFC): We fight patriarchy, not one another. Take a vow to treat other women as your allies (even if you don’t like them). Try to address conflict directly. Catch yourself if you automatically feel competitive. Remember, we are in this together—we’ll be more powerful if we help each other out.
- Employ what my friends at the [Call Your Girlfriend podcast](#) call “shine theory,” the idea that another woman’s success, or shine, is going to make you shine brighter, not look duller, by comparison. It’s a radically simple shift in thinking that I use regularly. So instead of competing with awesome women or feeling jealous of their success, surround yourself with them and bask in their glow.

Q

Given that this a subtle bias, how do we recognize it in ourselves if/when it is at work?

A

The first step is to acknowledge that we all—women and men—exhibit subtle gender bias (and racial bias, for that matter). If we come from a starting place where we know that we are going to have to overcome these barriers, then we can catch ourselves and check our behavior to make sure we're not feeding into the system. It can be as simple as noticing if women are being interrupted in meetings and jumping in to let them finish. Observing if we instinctively feel competitive with another woman and taking a moment to pause and ask why that is. It's viewing a woman who touts her accomplishments as "braggy" or the woman asking for a raise as "aggressive"—and then catching ourselves and asking, Would I think of her that way if she were a man? Knowing the landmines—and being able to name them—is so important because it allows us to catch ourselves in the moment or notice when somebody else is exhibiting the behavior.

Q

What can we all (women and men) do to change our office (or other) environment to get rid of subtle sexism in the first place?

A

Acknowledging it in ourselves (as noted above), as well as others, is crucial. The best response to subtle sexism when you see it is to find an appropriate way to call it out. More often than not, I think most people are receptive to that feedback when delivered in an effective way. But getting rid of subtle sexism also means advocating for systemic change: i.e., salary transparency, clear hiring goals, [family-friendly policies](#).

Q

What about overt sexism—any wisdom to offer women navigating blatantly sexist landscapes?

A

Call it out openly and don't tolerate it. At this moment, more than ever before, if you see something you think is inappropriate, do not stay silent. Helping (all) women means speaking up. What gets me through is knowing that we are more powerful together. That for every one woman who sticks her head out to call out sexist or racist behavior, if she has other women—and men!—supporting her, she's going to be more successful. So talk to your colleagues about these issues, even if you have to do it in private. Form alliances. Support one another. The reality is that it's easy to dismiss an individual who calls out injustice, but it's much harder—maybe even impossible—to dismiss an army of individuals.

Q

How do we draw the line between giving people the benefit of the doubt and identifying a sexist comment/behavior?

A

Trust your gut. For years when I was a young reporter, I repeatedly noticed that my story ideas would be given away to male colleagues and that I wasn't getting published with the same frequency, and I suspected I wasn't making as much money. Initially, I thought I must be doing something wrong. I must not be good enough. Turns out it wasn't me, and once I started talking to female colleagues, I began to realize we all felt this way, and suddenly it wasn't my problem—it was a collective problem.

Q

For people who haven't previously thought of themselves as activists, what are some small first steps to supporting feminism?

A

There are all sorts of ways to engage, like writing or calling their [local/federal](#) representative (this really does work! Research has found that calling or writing is much more effective than sending an email, and politicians really do listen), or taking the time to mentor young women, or volunteering or donating to an organization like the [ACLU](#). You can also form a feminist fight club! This can literally be half a dozen women—or men, too; anyone who believes in and is willing to fight for equality can be in the club. Meet at a coffee shop once a month. Talk about what's going on in the world and how you can engage. Ask how you can support one another, how you can stand up for what's right. Your FFC can be structured however you want it to be—but the point is that you're gathering, you're meeting, and you're talking openly and honestly about the issues.

Q

What's your required feminist reading list/people we should be following?

A

For Your Bookshelf:

- [We Should All Be Feminists](#) by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- [You Can't Touch My Hair: And Other Things I Still Have to Explain](#) by Phoebe Robinson
- [When Everything Changed: The Amazing Journey of American Women from 1960 to the Present](#) by Gail Collins
- [Bad Feminist: Essays](#) by Roxane Gay
- [All the Single Ladies: Unmarried Women and the Rise of an Independent Nation](#) by Rebecca Traister
- [Men Explain Things To Me](#) by Rebecca Solnit

For Your Bathroom:

- [*Our Bodies, Ourselves*](#) by The Boston Women's Health Collective

For Your Coffee Table:

- [*Game Changers: The Unsung Heroines of Sports History*](#) by Molly Schiot
- [*The Life-Changing Magic of Not Giving a F*ck: How to Stop Spending Time You Don't Have with People You Don't Like Doing Things You Don't Want to Do*](#) by Sarah Knight

For Kids:

- [*Rad American Women A-Z: Rebels, Trailblazers, and Visionaries who Shaped Our History...and Our Future!*](#) by Kate Schatz
- [*Strong Is the New Pretty: A Celebration of Girls Being Themselves*](#) by Kate T. Parker
- [*Goodnight Stories for Rebel Girls*](#) by Elena Favilli & Francesca Cavallo

Newsletters

- [CloverLetter](#)
- [The Broadsheet](#)
- [GirlBoss](#)
- [Unladylike](#) (actually a podcast)
- [Feminist Fight Club](#)

Instagram:

- [@femalecollective](#)
- [@shefights](#)
- [@lasfotosproject](#)

The New York Times

‘Worthless. Gutless. Loser.’ Online Attacks Escalate When the Mayor Is a Woman.

Female mayors are more than twice as likely as male mayors to experience psychological abuse and almost three times as likely to experience physical violence, a new study found.



Satya Rhodes-Conway, center, at a post-election news conference in April in Madison, Wis. Credit...Steve Apps/Wisconsin State Journal, via Associated Press

By Adeel Hassan

Dec. 23, 2019

Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway’s inbox makes abundantly clear how personally venomous local politics has become.



“‘Fat,’ ‘sick,’ ‘worthless,’ ‘gutless,’ ‘loser,’” she said, reciting some of the insults that have been leveled at her since becoming mayor of Madison, Wis., in April.

She got a taste of the animosity during her campaign, when she was criticized on blogs and social media not for her plans for housing, stormwater management or transportation, but for not wearing makeup.

“People are angry, or afraid, and express themselves in mean ways,” she said.

Ms. Rhodes-Conway is not alone in facing this type of abuse. As many as 79 percent of mayors in the United States report being the victim of harassment, threats or other psychological abuse, according to a recent study. Thirteen percent also reported instances of physical violence.

And one factor — gender — stood out above all others as a predictor of whether a mayor would be targeted. Using a statistical analysis that took into account factors like time in office, the researchers concluded that female mayors were more than twice as likely as their male counterparts to experience psychological abuse and almost three times as likely to experience physical violence.

The study, published in the academic journal [State and Local Government Review](#), and interviews with current and former mayors, lay bare today's harsh political climate, in which threats of violence over social media are constant and speaking out can be perceived as a political weakness.

"We're seeing more women get elected into political office everywhere at the same time that there are increasing threats against all public officials," said Mona Lena Krook, a political science professor at Rutgers University who was not involved in the study. "Men also face violence, but women face more, and more types of violence."

And the ease of making threats on social media is driving the abuse, said Sue Thomas of the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, the lead author of the paper.

Editors' Picks

"Social media is absolutely toxic to women politicians. It's much more virulent to me as a woman than as an out lesbian," said Annise Parker, who was mayor of Houston for three two-year terms. "Remarks about the way I look, what I weigh, or how I dress — aspects of femininity — escalate into threats of physical violence."



Annise Parker, the president of the LGBTQ Victory Fund and a former mayor of Houston, with Pete Buttigieg, the mayor of South Bend, Ind., and a Democratic presidential candidate. Credit...Don Emmert/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

And when Karen Weaver made history in Flint, Mich., by becoming its first female mayor — amid a burgeoning water crisis in 2015 — she believed that she would have more support to discuss the issues facing the city, she said.

On social media, she said, "They went after me like I wasn't a person and had no feelings or family."

In all, 16 percent of the 238 mayors who responded to the survey said their experiences of abuse had them thinking about leaving their office, suggesting that the toxic environment also threatens to scare off mayors who are interested in long careers and higher political office.



Karen Weaver, the former mayor of Flint, Mich., said that on social media, “They went after me like I wasn’t a person and had no feelings or family.”Credit...Jake May/The Flint Journal, via Associated Press

“Folks who have everything it takes to succeed, win an election and be a terrific public servant, that’s why they say no,” said Christopher Cabaldon, the mayor of West Sacramento, Calif., since 1998. He

added that on social media it’s “open season on politicians and their families. It definitely warps what our local democracy looks like.”

He said that he had been able to remain in office for more than two decades, in part, because he is single and has not faced the discomfort of having a spouse or relative attacked.



Christopher Cabaldon, center, is the longtime mayor of West Sacramento, Calif.Credit...Cliff Owen/Associated Press

“People don’t know it until they experience it,” said Ms. Parker, who is now the chief executive of the LGBTQ Victory Fund, which helps train candidates for office. “It doesn’t keep people out, but it burns people out once they’re in it.”

For Heather McTeer Toney, the first woman and the youngest person, at 28, to serve as mayor of Greenville, Miss., the menace arrived in her mailbox, not her inbox.

The words were written on a yellow sheet of paper, torn off from a legal pad, in black, blue and red ink, and the ones that explicitly threatened rape were written in red. It was more disturbing in a way, she said, that someone took the time to write a letter and mail it.

“It’s 15 years later and I can still remember that,” said Ms. McTeer Toney, who was also the first black person in the post. “Trust me, this is something that I want to forget.”



When Heather McTeer Toney served as mayor of Greenville, Miss., she received threats to her safety. Credit...Andrea Morales for The New York Times

While the many threats against Ms. McTeer Toney never escalated into violent actions during her two terms in office from 2004 to 2012, the threat of violence is not an abstract concern. Last year, a white man [physically abused](#) the first Latino mayor of Burien, a Seattle suburb, at a block party. The person arrested was charged with a hate crime.

“Every time you leave your house, you have to run into a constituent,” Ms. Krook, the political scientist, said by telephone from a conference in Uppsala, Sweden, where the study was discussed this month. “People at the local level are left more vulnerable to attack, and it’s more likely that people can reach you.”

Mark Barbee, 29, a restaurant server who leads Bridgeport, Pa., a city of 5,000 about 20 miles northwest of Philadelphia, said he received [death threats](#) after winning election in 2017. City Council meetings have been [especially contentious](#). His proposal for an anti-discrimination policy only increased the ire directed at him.

Mr. Barbee, a gay African-American, said that the difficult times — during which some supporters told him his advocacy was “not worth your life” — forced him to contemplate leaving office.



Mark Barbee is the first African-American and openly gay mayor of Bridgeport, Pa. Credit...Hannah Yoon for The New York Times

The survey also found that mayors who are younger, in strong chief executive systems, and in larger cities were more likely to be affected by violence and abuse.

And then there is the political calculation that comes with speaking out about the abuse: Will the public be sympathetic to a mayor who is complaining?

“Politicians have an image to keep up,” said Ms. Krook, the political scientist. “That’s particularly hard for women. If you potentially show some weakness, people can really jump on that.”

While in office, Ms. McTeer Toney, the former Greenville mayor, never spoke publicly of the threats she received, and wondered if her neighbors thought the police patrols around her home were a waste of taxpayers’ money.

“What’s terrifying is that unless something bad happens,” she said, “you sit in limbo wondering or waiting for the next threat to occur. It’s never a matter of if, but when.”

Many mayors seemed to have reluctantly accepted the abuse as part of serving in office, but have come up with their own methods of coping.

Ms. Rhodes-Conway does not engage with the attacks that come over social media, but her office reads everything, she said. “If I were reading this every day, it would be just awful,” she said. “I feel for mayors who have less of a staff, or less of a filter. This is really painful.”

Instead, she combats the barrage of nastiness by visiting coffee shops around the city, where she and her staff buy drinks for residents, many of whom arrive upset and talk for an hour. “Even when people disagree with me face to face, they are polite,” she said.

Mayor Lovely A. Warren of Rochester, N.Y., said she went so far as to shut down her personal Facebook account for nearly three years.



Mayor Lovely A. Warren of Rochester, N.Y., said she focused on meeting her constituents in person. Credit...Hans Pennink/Associated Press

“When you get into a fight with the pig, you get dirty and the pig likes it,” she said, paraphrasing advice she was given by her family.

Adeel Hassan is a reporter and editor on the National Desk. He is a founding member of [Race/Related](#), and much of his work focuses on identity and discrimination. He started the Morning Briefing for NYT Now and was its inaugural writer. He also served as an editor on the International Desk. [@adeelnyc](#)

A version of this article appears in print on Dec. 24, 2019, Section A, Page 16 of the New York edition with the headline: ‘Worthless.’ ‘Gutless.’ Online Attacks Rise When the Mayor Is a Woman.. [Order Reprints](#) | [Today’s Paper](#) | [Subscribe](#)

A Record Number Of Black Women Are Becoming Mayor Of Major Cities

April 5, 2019

NATALIE MOORE

WBEZ91.5
FROM CHICAGO'S **NPR** NEWS STATION



Chicago Mayor-elect Lori Lightfoot gives her acceptance speech on Tuesday, April 2, 2019. Lightfoot's election is the latest in a record number of black women elected mayor in the nation's 100 largest cities.

Manuel Martinez/WBEZ

A black woman will lead the third largest city in America, elected by voters who said they wanted change and the symbolism of a new era of politics in segregated Chicago.

Lori Lightfoot has never held office but won all 50 of the city's wards in a crushing landslide on Tuesday.

Lightfoot's win breaks race and gender barriers, and she's openly gay with a wife and daughter. On the campaign trail, she leaned into her blue-collar roots growing up in a deeply segregated Ohio steel town. In her acceptance speech, Lightfoot invoked the legendary Harold Washington, the city's first black mayor and others.

"I stand on the shoulders of so many. The shoulders of strong, black women, like Ida B. Wells, Gwendolyn Brooks and Annie Ruth Lowery. The shoulders of LGBTQ+ trailblazers, like Dr. Ron Sable, Vernita Gray and Art Johnston," Lightfoot said.

She's the former president of the Chicago police board, and also a former corporate attorney and federal prosecutor. Her message of "bring in the light" resonated with voters who raged against the local Democratic Party machine, notorious in Chicago for dynastic politics, patronage hiring and corruption.

"People felt like this is a moment where we can try something new. We can possibly go in a different direction, and we can represent to the world that we need something fresh," said Cathy J. Cohen, a political scientist at the University of Chicago.

Lightfoot's election is the latest in a record number of [black women elected mayor in the nation's 100 largest cities](#). Lightfoot will become the eighth such woman to lead one of those cities, Chicago being the largest, when she takes office in May.

The movement has been swift. Just five years ago, there was only one black woman leading any of the nation's top 100 cities.

Last year, voters elected London Breed mayor of San Francisco, then the largest city run by a black woman, while voters in Atlanta and New Orleans elected Keisha Lance Bottoms and LaToya Cantrell, respectively, as their leaders. Charlotte, N.C., Baltimore, Washington, D.C., and Baton Rouge, La., have also elected black women as mayors.

The Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University produces annual reports tracking the progress of black women and other women of color in elected office. Though they remain grossly underrepresented, throughout the country, women of color are gaining in unprecedented numbers – from U.S. Congress to City Hall.

But the rapid rise of black women mayors in large American cities is a sign that black women are making strides in an area where all women have long been absent, said Debbie Walsh, the center's director.

"One of the challenges that we've seen over time for women, in general, is women in executive leadership," Walsh said. "There's an assumption that women in legislative positions, whether federal level, state level or even at the city level work well in committee, work well on councils. It fits for the stereotype for women."

"Breaking that final glass ceiling of women as executives really opens up a world of possibilities. To be the person who is the final decider, the place where the buck stops, is something that we think voters may be more hesitant about," Walsh continued.

What's more, in some cases, the rise of black women mayors transcends race.

Consider that in Chicago alone, two black women were the top two vote-getters in a pool of 14 candidates that included a white man whose family name has been synonymous with Chicago politics for more than half a century. In that February race, which led to Tuesday's runoff between mayor-elect Lightfoot and opponent Toni Preckwinkle, Lightfoot didn't win any of the city's majority-black wards. Her support tilted toward North Side white wards.

Similarly, Breed was elected mayor in a city where African-Americans are just 5 percent of the population.

Still, the challenges don't end for black women once they're in those executive seats.

As a black woman leading, Breed said she has to be even better than expectations. "I feel like I have to work five times as hard," she said.

She also noted the double standard that women face when it comes to how they look. Breed said past male mayors got away with a simple wardrobe of blue, gray and black suits.

"It's different for women than it is for men. For example, your wardrobe, your hair, your appearance, how you look, makeup," Breed said. "It shouldn't matter, but it does."

For Lightfoot, there's no shortage of challenges awaiting her. Education access, housing instability, police accountability in black and brown neighborhoods, economic opportunity on the black South and West sides and a shrinking middle class are among the most pressing issues in Chicago.

Voter turnout in Tuesday's runoff clocked in at an abysmal 31 percent, but civic engagement is high as is a reform mood in the city. The tenor of the election is markedly different from four or eight years ago.

Activists here helped shape the discourse during this election cycle around issues of criminal justice and racial inequity.

One of the questions facing Lightfoot is whether she's really not connected to the Democratic party machine and the city's political elite. It's complicated.

On Tuesday, Lightfoot bested Preckwinkle, who is president of the Cook County board and head of the Democratic party in the county. But outgoing Mayor Rahm Emanuel tapped Lightfoot to lead the city's police board. Years earlier, former Mayor Richard M. Daley appointed Lightfoot to police oversight and procurement posts during a time when the city struggled with scandals in both areas.

"She has the possibility of setting a new course of bringing new people in around her but it could be difficult if you've never run a big bureaucracy in a city like Chicago. You are going to lean in on people who know how to do that and a lot of people like that are affiliated with the machine," said the University of Chicago's Cohen.

Lightfoot's fiercest critics take umbrage with her styling herself as an outsider and progressive. They aren't happy with her role on the police board. But in the wake of the video release of the Laquan McDonald shooting, Lightfoot led a police reform task force that released a [scathing report](#) on the police department — a far more critical assessment than the one delivered months later by the U.S. Department of Justice. Then, she quit the police board and announced her mayoral candidacy months before Emanuel surprised the city by saying he wouldn't seek a third term. "It's the year of the woman. It's time for us to take charge and change some things in our community," said activist Jeanette Taylor, who won a seat on Chicago's City Council Tuesday night.

Indeed, a record number of black women in Chicago and the state hold offices or were recently elected — from lieutenant governor, to city treasurer, to county clerk to top county prosecutor.

Against the backdrop of this mayoral historic moment is the activism of black women who toil behind the scenes on grassroots movements — from Mute R. Kelly to Black Lives Matter to Say Her Name to reparations for survivors of Chicago police torture.

"We can never allow any mayor to be as powerful as Rahm and Daley ever again. Lori has to deal with the city of Chicago, all of its constituents and this council who is going to push her," Taylor said.

Lightfoot pledges to put more resources in neighborhoods, not just downtown.

"I hope that the sea change we're witnessing lives up to the hype," said Delmarie Cobb, who founded a political action committee called Ida's Legacy to help black women get in office.

"I'd like to see investment in the black community. We've been ignored for decades now and what we're seeing in terms of the exodus of black people from the city has been 40 years in the making," Cobb said. "It's going to take a lot to turn this around."

Perhaps inspired by her words, her vision and her passion, Lightfoot's convincing victory at least suggests that voters of this fractured and often divided city believe in a black woman to lead and to try and unite them.

*Natalie Moore is a reporter on WBEZ's Race, Class and Communities desk. Follow her [@natalieymoore](#).
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TIME

Austin Held Sexist Training on How to Deal with Women, Outraged Leaders Say



Members of the Austin city council listen to city manager Marc Ott during a news conference at City Hall, on May 13, 2015, in Austin, Texas. Eric Gay—AP

BY **ELIZA GRAY**

MAY 14, 2015

Women aren't interested in math, ask a lot of questions and process ideas differently from men.

That's what members of the Austin city council staff heard during a recent training session on how to work with female leaders, which the city manager

organized in March after Austin elected a majority female city council (seven women out of 10 members) for the first time in the city's history.

The training, billed as a diversity meeting entitled "The Changing Dynamics of Governance: Women Leading in Government," sparked widespread outrage in the city's government and beyond after it was recently reported in the *Austin-American Statesman*, shocking the female members of the city council, who had not been invited to attend a meeting that was designed for staff. The training was so offensive that the city removed the video of it from its website, saying in a **press release**: "the training was not consistent with the City's culture, philosophy, and management approach."

Fox's local station in Tampa Bay has a link a snippet of the **video**, depicting one speaker, Jonathan K. Allen, the city manager of Lauderdale Lakes, Fla., who has **since been fired**, saying: "If you use or attempt to use the same communication or management techniques that you used or attempted to use in a predominantly male-dominated environment, you will be making a serious error in your professional development because they don't process things the same way."

Allen also said women ask a lot of questions, citing conversations with his 11-year-old daughter, according to the *Austin-American Statesman*, which broke the story on Tuesday night. "My daughter taught me the importance of being patient," he said, and added that women weren't much interested in financials, paraphrasing female leaders he worked with: "Mr. Manager, I don't want to hear about the financial argument, I want to hear about how this impacts the whole community."

"I heard about it last night and was speechless," Leslie Pool, an Austin city councilwoman, told **Fox**, adding: "Oh math is hard, right. Well I took Qualitative Analysis in my master's degree class at the LBJ School a decade or more ago, and I actually did pretty darn well."

Several female council members addressed the controversy in a **press conference** held Wednesday.

In a joint response to the controversy over the training session, speakers Jonathan K. Allen and Dr. Miya Burt-Stewart issued a statement published by the *Austin-American Statesman*: “Any interpretation that we do not support and appreciate the growing number of women executives and elected officials in both the public and private sector is absolutely not true.”

Austin City Manager Marc Ott indicated that the training had been a mistake. “I take responsibility for this,” he told Fox. “The buck stops at the city manager so I take responsibility, it should not have happened, it should have been vetted.”

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var browsername = deviceAPI.browserName; //Safari var br_version = deviceAPI.browserVersion;  
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//Apple var devicename = deviceAPI.deviceName; //iPhone XS
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Women Support West St. Paul Mayor, Responding To Sexism With Tampons

By [Mary McGuire](#) May 15, 2018 at 8:57 am



WEST ST. PAUL (WCCO) — — Dozens of women are showing their support for the mayor of West St. Paul after reports of sexism and gender discrimination.

This all started after a contentious city council meeting last month, when Mayor Jenny Halverson got a rude delivery at her doorstep.

Boxes of feminine hygiene products showed up overnight after she tried to appoint three females to city government positions.

Council member John Bellows accused her of making those decisions based on gender and that some of the candidates were not qualified.

At Monday night's city council meeting, women collected boxes of tampons and pads to be donated to those in need.

Inside the chambers, more than a hundred people filled the seats, with dozens, including Halverson, speaking out publicly.

"This is not political," she said. "This is about sexism, harassment, decency and respect." .

Bellows, the council member at the center of the controversy, also took time to defend his decision to vote down one of the female candidates.

"If you are here because you think any vote other than confirming all three nominees was sexist, I respectfully disagree," he said. "As I said at the last meeting, the planning commission votes should not have been a gender issue."

In April, Halverson announced she will not seek re-election.

She is the city's first female mayor.

The city council is made up of all male members.



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"I'm not here to play backhanded politics. I want to deal with the issue head on."

<http://tnvge.co/NxX1mJX>



[This Woman Started a Pad Drive After Facing "Petty" Harassment](#)

Someone left pads on the mayor's doorstep, and Samantha Green is turning the gesture around.

teenvogue.com

MARY MCGUIRE