Recent violent encounters between police and black Americans led to a resurgence in protests around civil rights. Both sides engage in violence to underscore their beliefs (which include broad and dangerous stereotyping of the other side, at a minimum). The American public is divided in its support of the movement, seemingly split between declaring support for law and order (the police) or equality in civil rights (black and other marginalized communities).
groups), two ideals that need not be pitted against each other. The underlying issue in BLM and the other movements it has spawned, such as All Lives Matter and Blue Lives Matter, is power and control and how they play out in people's everyday lives.

Racism occurs when people feel prejudice or practice discrimination against others whose racial background differs from their own, and when a particular racial group believes it is superior to others. All the other -isms are manifestations of the same sentiment: one group forms stereotypes and prejudices against another and then acts on those beliefs in a way that diminishes the other in some way.

Discriminatory beliefs function as a rationale for using power as an advantage over the other. They justify treating people differently than we would judge to be cruel or unjust if we applied them to our group.[1] Conflicts over racism, sexism, transgenderism, and all other types of bias and bigotry make the news every day. In each situation, there are two sides to the story: two factions dispute the consequences of power around a facet of identity. In-group and outgroup dynamics are at work, forcing people into insular camps. Moreover, stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination facilitate people becoming entrenched in their opinions.

Racism in the News

In the summer of 2017, violence broke out between protesters and counter-protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia. White-power protesters had organized a rally to dispute the removal of a statue of Robert E. Lee from Lee Park, recently renamed Emancipation Park. This was one protest in response to the removal of other Confederate monuments around the South that resulted from the Charleston church shooting in 2015 in which a white supremacist murdered nine people in a church. Counter-protesters at Charlottesville were from a wide array of ideologies, but they united in opposition to white supremacism.

Police were criticized for not being more proactive in deescalating the violent skirmishes that erupted throughout the city during the rally. More than two dozen people were injured and one woman died in a vehicular attack against counter-protesters, and the city descended into chaos.

President Trump reacted to the event on camera: "We all must be united and condemn all that hate stands for. This is an I Spy as one! And, "We condemn in the strongest possible terms this egregious display of hatred, bigotry and violence.

He was criticized for not condemning white supremacists directly, and for the next two days he expanded and defended his initial statements in the face of criticism from numerous fronts. He placed blame on both sides, called out the very violent alt-left, and registered his objection to the removal of confederate statues: "Does anybody want George Washington's statue [taken down]? No. . . . They're trying to take away our culture, they're trying to take away our history. And our weak leaders, they do it overnight.

In the Charlottesville rally, opposing groups demonstrated their viewpoints publicly on an issue of identity. Acts of violence and hate showcased the underlying intolerance of difference and racism that has fractured this country since before the Civil War. Demonstrations and rallies are one form of protest around issues of perceived social injustice. Protest is a form of expression that is protected as one of our civil liberties.

In 1918, Theodore Roosevelt said, "Free speech, exercised both individually and through a free press, is a necessity in any country where people are themselves free." The right to freedom of expression, or free speech, is closely linked to the right to peaceful protest: "free speech would mean nothing if there was no right to use public spaces to make your views known."[3]

Protest can take the form of mass demonstrations or individual statements, in which a person tries to enact change. Colin Kaepernick, former quarterback of the San Francisco 49ers who led the team in the Super Bowl in 2012, became a lightning rod of controversy for kneeling during the national anthem, an action he took since 2016. Kaepernick stated he was protesting social injustice and police brutality toward minorities, not the flag or the military.

Though Kaepernick has not played football since 2016 when he opted out of his 49ers contract, he remains in playing shape. He has not, however, been picked up by a team, even teams that need an effective quarterback. Some in the NFL, the media, and the public believe Kaepernick has not been picked up because of his sociopolitical beliefs and his biracial background.

Kaepernick's protest sparked similar dissent throughout the NFL. It raised the ire of wealthy team owners, most of whom are white, as well as President Trump. In response to player protests during the national anthem, Jerry Jones, owner of the Dallas Cowboys, issued a statement that if any of his players knelt during the anthem, they would be benched for the game. After he issued his threat in October, all of the Cowboys players remained standing during the anthem.

It was debated whether Jones had the power to bench players because of their beliefs. The NAACP informed Jo...
violation of their First Amendment rights. Some contend that, in football, white owners still have ultimate power and control over their multiethnic teams.

In other professional sports, seven-time world champion and NASCAR team owner Richard Petty and multimillionaire NASCAR team owner Richard Childress both issued near-simultaneous statements that if any individual on their respective teams did anything other than stand during the national anthem, that person would be fired. These statements sparked a firestorm of arguments over First Amendment rights.

However, no firings occurred on either team, and the entire NASCAR community continued to stand during the national anthem. However, retiring NASCAR legend and fan favorite Dale Earnhardt Jr. stated that he defends anyone's right to protest however they want.

Richard Petty Motorsports named Darrell "Bubba" Wallace as a full-time driver, making him the first full-time black driver in NASCAR in over fifty years of the sport. Wallace was regarded as one of the most influential "new" drivers in NASCAR and won championships in NASCAR's lower-division race series.

His appointment came after individuals inside and outside NASCAR complained that the sport was biased and an ol' white boys' game that was in need of the same diversity that other popular American sports have accepted. Yet Richard "The King" Petty said they decided on Wallace because of Wallace's raw, fearless talent alone and that he could care less about the color of Bubba's skin.

Incidentally, Wallace, who is biracial, disagreed with the decision of other professional sports figures to kneel during the national anthem.

In Game 3 of the 2017 World Series, the Houston Astros first baseman Yuli Gurriel was seen on national television making an ethnically insensitive motion with his face toward Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Yu Darvish. This occurred after Gurriel hit a second-inning homerun off Darvish.

Gurriel is Cuban and noted for his inability to hit against Asian pitchers. Darvish is Japanese-Iranian and was raised in Japan, where he is regarded as a superstar. After being criticized nationally for the gesture, Gurriel issued a strong apology to Darvish, and Darvish accepted Gurriel's apology and left things at that, hoping to move on from the controversy.

As a consequence of Gurriel's gesture, he was suspended for five games at the beginning of the 2018 MLB season. Although Gurriel was punished after his facial mocking of Darvish, his suspension did not occur during the World Series, which upset a great number of players and fans and deepened the controversy, which prompted some commentators to claim that advertising income and network ratings must out-value racial decency.[8]

Bias in Business in the News

Even with laws in place to protect Americans from unequal treatment, discrimination still occurs. Sexism is prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination on the basis of sex or gender. In the workplace, gender discrimination mostly centers around on hiring, pay inequity, and company culture. Injured parties claim that they were passed over for promotions based on their sex or gender, received pay that was less than that of colleagues of another gender in similar positions, or were treated unfairly on the basis of their sex or gender. Discriminatory company culture is more subtle and insidious and adds up to everything that makes it more difficult for one sex or gender to advance or succeed in a workplace.

The Civil Rights Act prohibits harassment in the workplace related to race, sex, national origin, and religion. But the Faragher defense. To exploit this soft spot in the law, employers (1) must provide a channel for employees to complain to (such as an HR department) and (2) take reasonable measures to prevent further harm. This gives employers a lot of latitude in dealing with reported abuse, and sometimes the steps they take to stop or prevent abuse, especially abuse committed by an economically valuable high-ranking employee, may be superficial.

In weighing the options for how to deal with the reported abuse by a prized employee, employers take profit, the effort to replace the employee, and the potential for litigation to be brought by the terminated employee into consideration. It's often more practical for employers to allow the abuser to stay in place and to silence the matter with the aggrieved employee in other ways. Note that Fox News allowed Bill O'Reilly to keep his job until news of his sexual misconduct began to drive away advertisers.

Yet, "in a climate where victims speak freely, employers must now expect to publicly defend their employment decisions in cases where sexual harassment or discrimination could balloon into a PR nightmare and threaten a company's all-important brand.[9] to trigger public discourse and spark a change in sexual harassment and gender discrimination policies.

Take Curt Schilling, a former All-Star baseball pitcher and analyst for ESPN, who was fired after he posted a message accompanied by his accompanying comment was in response to the North Carolina law barring transgender people from using public restrooms that did not match their gender assigned at birth. In a statement about his firing, ESPN said that it is an inclusive company and that Schilling was told his conduct was
A Google engineer who wrote an "anti-diversity manifesto" was fired. The essay, titled "Google's Ideological Echo Chamber," recommended that the company should focus on ideological diversity. The manifesto also mentioned that women might not be in the company's leadership positions because of differences in their preferences and abilities, not because of sexism.[11]

**Sexual Harassment and Assault in the News**

Sexual harassment and sexual assault are severe forms of sexism and are exactly about power and control, enabling bodies and disregard other people's right to consent."[12] Sovereignty of the body is also called self-ownership and humans have a moral or natural right to have bodily integrity and exclusive control over their body and life.[13] ”

Although the act is sexualized, the motivation stems from the perpetrator's need for dominance and control. Such one person, who holds more power, controls more resources, wields more influence, and a target, who is in a less-powerful position and who needs or wants what the powerholder controls, such as a job, an opportunity, safety.[16] When "one person is in a position of authority over another, even if the other person is passive, the right to control the other person is automatically transferred to the person in power."[16] Let's see Harvey Weinstein, a Hollywood producer and film executive, sexually assaulted complete strangers and actresses alike using repetitive manipulative tactics to wear women down, such as "Don't embarrass me" and "Don't ruin your friendship with me," in a decades-long pattern of sexual misconduct with talent, asked them to his room, and if they refused he tried to coerce and terrorize them by threatening destruction.

If he manipulated an actress into his room, he would begin by asking for a massage, giving a massage, or asking to anything like Bill Cosby did, as in, drug women, which he deemed coercive.

Weinstein's assistants were always complicit in his actions. In most of the rape cases, Weinstein had a key to the women's rooms, and Hollywood people who knew they would be vulnerable. He reached quiet settlements to make accusations go away and used spies to suppress a woman's rights activist, to dissuade McGowan from accusing him publicly.[18]

Weinstein was fired from his company when his behavior was made public. Many of his friends, including notable ignorance or remained silent until events prompted them to make public statements. Affleck posted a message to social media saying that the allegations against Weinstein make him "sick" and that he was "saddened and angry that a man who I worked with used his position of power to intimidate, sexually harass and manipulate many women over decades."

Then women began making allegations against Affleck.

Weinstein's downfall also sparked the #MeToo social media campaign in which women denounced sexual harassment and assault and encouraged women to share their experiences. Within a day, 4.7 million people around the world joined the conversation on Twitter. Facebook reported that more than 45 percent of users in the United States were friends with someone who posted a message including the words "Me Too."

"On one side, it's a bold declarative statement that 'I'm not ashamed' and 'I'm not alone.' On the other side, it's a simple understanding of you and I'm here for you or I get it," said Tarana Burke, creator of the #MeToo movement. She was one of the women of color who had survived sexual abuse and exploitation.[21]

The public shaming and reprisal in the entertainment industry quickly surged into other male-dominated areas. The fostering an environment of vulgarity and sexism in his kitchens. Multiple women complained of harassment and resources support. Besh stepped down from his company, but many attested that the restaurant industry continued sexual violence.[22]
After the Besh news, a chef and restaurant owner in New Orleans conducted an informal phone survey of other professional colleagues. Her findings also support the idea that employees need an objective agent, such as an effective human resources department, to report and register complaints. Her findings also support the idea that employees need an objective agent, such as an effective human resources department, to report and register complaints.

"Unless men in the restaurant industry, and in all industries, join the ranks, systemic change will never happen. And I will have to come from those who have it."[24]

Jon McNeill, the president of global sales and service at Tesla, said, "As a father of a daughter, I do not want to be a part of an organization or create a culture that would limit her. I can't help that I'm a white dude, but I can help the culture that gets created."[25]

In the media, Mark Halperin, the well-known journalist and coauthor of a book on Barack Obama, was suspended for his behavior and said he would step back from his work to deal with his issue.[26]

Bill O'Reilly, host of the highest-rated political commentary show on cable, The O'Reilly Factor, was forced to resign over sexual harassment scandals that yielded two valuable lessons. One was that an atmosphere of casual sexism might constitute a "hostile working environment" even when it did not involve a specific word or gesture directed at a specific woman. Another was that "consent" loses much of its meaning in the context of power imbalances.[27]

Power does corrupt, and those who stand to gain economically by keeping quiet about misconduct are complicit in perpetuating the corruption. Politics, the ultimate field in which power plays, abounds with sexual harassment. One commentator says:

For my own part, I received a crash course in all this in Washington during the 1990s, where I spent five formative years. The city was shaken by a series of sexual harassment scandals that yielded two valuable lessons. One was that an atmosphere of casual sexism might constitute a hostile working environment even when it did not involve a specific word or gesture directed at a specific woman. Another was that "consent" loses much of its meaning in the context of power imbalances.

A majority of people interviewed who worked in Congress said they experienced sexual harassment or knew someone who had. Female workers in the capital, from aides to senators, must learn the unwritten rules to avoid being sexually harassed or abused. "There is also the 'creep list'--an informal roster passed along by word-of-mouth, consisting of the male members most notorious for inappropriate behavior, ranging from making sexually suggestive comments or gestures to seeking physical relations with younger employees and interns."[29]

Despite the reprisal of other powerful figures in various industries, it's not likely that the culture in politics will change. The power hierarchy often takes the shape of one central figure at the top on whose success the rest of the network's chances rest. Underlings are reluctant to make waves that would jeopardize their position or get the leader in trouble.[30] On the other hand, "sometimes, the sexual advances from members of Congress or senior aides are reciprocated in the hopes of advancing one's career--what one political veteran bluntly referred to as a 'sex trade on Capitol Hill.'"[31]

During Donald Trump's 2016 campaign for the U.S. presidency, the most powerful position in the world, eleven women accused him of sexual misconduct. Why were those allegations brushed aside as lies and "locker-room talk," but accusations against Harvey Weinstein, a person of relatively lower stature, snowballed into #MeToo and orchestrated the disgrace, firing, and takedown of multiple abusers across sectors of society?

It may have to do with the social standing of the accusers relative to that of the accused. "Weinstein's sexual harassment of many of his accusers are celebrities, with status, fame, and success commensurate with his own. Sexual harassment is about power, not sex, and it has taken women of extraordinary status, fame, and success to have a voice that is heard. But for people who have no power, it is status that helps them to have a voice that is heard."[32]

The three dimensions of the social hierarchy--power, status, and influence--come into play and determine whose voice will have authority or control over others. But for people who have no power, it is status that helps them to have a voice that is heard.
Although most perpetrators are men, and there is a general pervasive myth that men have an uncontrollable biological need for sex, sexual misconduct is about power and “has more to do with how men are socialized, and how our society has constructed gender and masculinity, than biology.”[34] Worsens the trauma and shame for survivors. But when perpetrators face few consequences for their abuse, it fosters an environment that perpetuates violence, disrespect, and abuse of power.

Since the Weinstein scandal, a number of people who have been sexually harassed have come forward and named their abuser. Admitting to harassment is unusual because so much is at stake for accusers; the current tidal wave of exposures represents a significant change in public consciousness.

Power disparities affect people's--or a nation's--behavior in relation to difference. Just as sexual harassment threatens the sovereignty of the United States, the argument goes. President Trump is building a wall between the United States and Mexico because illegal immigrants pose a security hazard; they bring crime, gangs, and drugs; they steal jobs from Americans; and they are placing an undue burden on the American people.

Sovereignty is the power of a state--or an individual--to do what is necessary to govern itself. "By not exercising 'control' over borders through actively blocking immigrants . . . the United States government would surrender a supposedly vital component of its national sovereignty."[35] Notice a state at this level, lack of power leads to breaches of bodily integrity in the form of sexual harassment and to the unfair treatment in the form of discrimination.

In the following quotations, substitute the name of any less-empowered group for "women," substitute the name of any powerholding group for "men," and see how the concept applies across all the -isms:

After the revelations about Weinstein and others...issues like unequal pay and lack of promotion might seem minor problems--but they are the problems that create men like Weinstein. It's the imbalance of pay and power that control over the economic lives of women and, as a result, influence over their physical lives. These subtler forms of discrimination, familiar to almost any woman who has held a job, can in fact be especially insidious, since they are easier for companies, and even victims, to dismiss.[36]

Men who demean, degrade or disrespect women have been able to operate with such impunity--not just in their influence and investment can make or break a career. The asymmetry of power is ripe for abuse.[37]

The cases of racism and sexism that have come to public attention seem to point to the power held by white males in a culture in which white men embody the vast majority of power, through both economic and political might as well as being white and male."[38]

This is an observation, not a value judgment. We can see and acknowledge that there are relative differences in human relations lead to more advantages and benefits accorded to some, and less to others. Let me reiterate: it is wrong. It is the way our society operates now.

What is wrong is when a person in a relative position of power uses that power to coerce another into an unsafe act, or on a prejudice based on a stereotype to discriminate against another. What is wrong is when a person in a relative position of power uses that power to coerce another into an unsafe act, or on a prejudice based on a stereotype to discriminate against another. Whether power is earned or inherited, it demands to be used responsibly with empathy and respect.

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