

# THE BYSTANDER MOMENT

Featuring Jackson Katz

[Transcript]

## Introduction

**News clips:** Several allegations of sexual harassment against movie producer Harvey Weinstein. /// Weinstein is facing serious allegations of sexual harassment. /// Explosive new allegations tonight. /// Harvey Weinstein charged with rape and sexual assault in New York. /// More than sixty women have come forward to accuse Weinstein of sexual harassment, assault, and rape. /// A sight dozens of his accusers had hoped for, but thought would never come. Harvey Weinstein turning himself into New York City police. /// Harvey! Harvey! What do you have to say about the 2004 allegations? /// Are you sorry, Harvey?

**Jackson Katz:** When Harvey Weinstein was outed as a serial sexual abuser of women, it shined a spotlight on a whole range of other high-profile men. Including Roger Ailes at Fox News. High profile men in Silicon Valley. On Wall Street. And a whole range of other men across media culture.

When all these high-profile men were outed, it brought sexual assault and domestic violence into the public conversation in a way that's unprecedented. And actually catalyzed the #MeToo movement.

**Women chanting:** Stop the violence. Stop the rape.

**News clips:** Hundreds of women marched yesterday along the Hollywood Walk of Fame. /// The march was centered around the #MeToo movement.

**Katz:** The #MeToo movement is an incredible outpouring of women's voices. Both in the United States and all over the world.

**Tarana Burke:** What we represent is a reminder, a living breathing reminder, that we are human beings, not hashtags.

**Katz:** It's building on literally a half century of incredible activism and work by women.

**Women chanting:** Women unite, take back the night. Women unite, take back the night.

**Katz:** This is work that's been done by women across class, race, ethnicity. Building the battered women's movement, building the sexual assault movements, and the movements against sexual harassment.

**Women chanting:** No more rape. No more rape.

**Katz:** This abuse had been going on for centuries, for millennia, but because of social media and other forms of communication, women and young women have had a voice in a way they didn't previously.

**News clip:** Their stories flooded social media and painted a picture of just how many people endure sexual abuse and harassment every day.

**Katz:** And now they're being heard and talking about their experiences.

**News clip:** It happened to me too. / Me too. / It happened to me too. / And it happened to me too. / It's my truth and no one can take that away from me. It's my story.

**Katz:** And one of the most important things that's happened with the #MeToo movement, is it's not just shined a spotlight on perpetrators like Harvey Weinstein, but it's rather focused some attention on the people around those men and the role that they have played in participating in the culture that produces this abusive behavior.

**News clips:** Lena Dunham just said too many men are silent about sexism in Hollywood. And has that silence enabled men like Harvey? /// It's not just these men who are acting in this bad way, but it was also an entire culture that supports that. / Telling them to be quiet and silent. /// Why didn't anybody say anything lies within every story that we've seen for the last two months, which is that, I didn't want to be the one to take this person on. /// How do you get the change of the silent bystander to move into that engaged bystander?

**Katz:** And there's an emerging discussion about the role of the friends, and the colleagues, and the peers, in these workplaces and other places who are around these perpetrators and how so few people spoke up. How so few people challenged and interrupted the abusive behavior. How they participated in a culture that sustained that kind of abuse.

And in fact, it's important to remember that this focus on bystanders didn't come out of nowhere either. One of the most important developments in the field of gender violence prevention over the past quarter century, has been this focus on the bystander -- the friends, the teammates, the colleagues and coworkers.

But it's really important to note that there are different approaches to how you work with the bystander. And it's crucial to think about these differences because they matter. Because if we want to be truly transformative in this moment, in this incredible moment, there are ways of thinking about the bystander that are more effective than others.

### **Thinking Beyond the “Bystander Effect”**

**Film clip:** The Witness (2015)

Two weeks ago today, twenty minutes after three in the morning, it was a dark night. Kitty Genovese, twenty-eight years, old drove her car into the parking lot at the Kew Gardens station of

the Long Island Railroad as she'd been doing for a year. She stopped; saw a man against the wall; she didn't quite make it halfway down the block before the killer drove a knife into her.

**Katz:** When people hear the word bystander, they think about the Kitty Genovese case in 1964 in New York City.

**Film clip:** The Witness (2015)

Fifteen years ago, a young woman was stabbed to death in front of a Queens, New York apartment half a block from her home. / Tomorrow marks what many people regard as one of the most shameful anniversaries in New York City history. / Police discovered that more than thirty people had witnessed her attack and no one had picked up the phone to call the police.

**Katz:** When Kitty Genovese was murdered by Winston Moseley on the streets outside of her Queens apartment complex and then supposedly nobody called the police that propelled a whole cottage industry of studies and social psychological inquiry into the "bystander effect" and why people don't act when they see someone in duress on the streets.

**News clip:** Unknown to these passersby, Peter is an actor. As part of an experiment on bystander apathy, he's pretending to be ill. How long before he gets help?

**Katz:** And there's certain kind of social psychological explanations for why people don't intervene. For example, the concept of the diffusion of responsibility, like "I'm waiting for somebody else to act, therefore I'm not going to act."

News clip

**News clip:** The woman is on the ground and you can see the man repeatedly slapping her and punching the victim.

**Katz:** Or when people don't act when they something happening on the streets, it's often because they're afraid of the potential repercussions.

**News clip:** There's at least ten individuals that are standing around watching this. Approximately, five males that are watching this and no one is intervening in a female being beat this way. / I don't want to jump in and be a hero and just get hurt.

**Katz:** The problem with talking about the "bystander effect" is that that has to do with strangers seeing something happening to strangers on the street. When we talk about the bystander approach, we're not talking about strangers on the street, we're talking about known peer cultures. We're talking about when they're in peer cultures where they know people, why don't they act? And the reason why, generally speaking, why people don't act in their own peer culture is not because of their physical fear, it's because of their social fear.

**YouTube video:** Hey, let's go grind on some whores, bro.

**Katz:** When a young guy doesn't speak up and challenge his friend who's just made a sexist joke, it's not because he's worried about getting assaulted. Although there are some instances where in male peer cultures men are actually physically afraid of each other. It's because they're afraid of the social consequences. That they might be seen as soft, that they might be seen as not being one of the guys. Somehow their status within the peer culture might be affected.

The most disturbing manifestation of these kind of dynamics happens in gang rapes.

**News clips:** The gang rape of a sixteen-year old girl took place outside a Richmond High School homecoming dance. /// Two high school football stars from Steubenville, Ohio sexually assaulted a visibly intoxicated sixteen-year old girl. /// How could so many all-American kids stand by and let this happen without anyone calling for help?

**Katz:** Gang rapes are often initiated by one or two guys and they pull in other guys to participate with them. And the pressure on these other guys to participate in this abusive, very abusive criminal act, is intense in that moment.

One of the most famous examples of these dynamics happened in the so-called Big Dan's rape case in New Bedford, Massachusetts in the early 1980s. A feature film called *The Accused* with Jodie Foster was made based on that incident and it was the first time in the mainstream that we examined as a culture the role of the bystander.

**Film clip:** *The Accused* (1988)

Kurt, you a faggot? / You gonna let him talk to you like that? / Maybe you a faggot? You pull down your pants, we'll see silk panties, huh?

**Katz:** The woman in many of these gang rapes situations is completely dehumanized and depersonalized and objectified. They're not thinking about her as a person. They're thinking about the dynamic of what's going on between the guys. They're sharing an experience an experience together. The guys are. And a lot guys don't have the self-confidence in that moment of truth to say, "this is wrong. You cannot do this. She's vulnerable. She's drunk. She's passed out. What are you doing?"

And so, violence doesn't just cause silence in its victims. It also causes a lot of other silence, including the silence of people around the victim or the target and it causes silence in people around the perpetrator. And the bystander approach, if done well, is an effective strategy of helping people to think about ways in which they can break their complicit silence.

**Film clip:** *Rape Prevention* (1977)

Before this day is over, something very ugly is going to happen to hundreds of American women. It is a deliberate act of violence. It is one of the fastest growing crimes in this country and any woman could become its victim.

**Katz:** Back in the 70s and 80s, most approaches to gender violence prevention focused almost exclusively on instructing women how to avoid being assaulted.

**Film clip:** Nobody's Victim (1972)

There are many things in your purse that can be effective weapons. A teasing brush or a rat-tail comb, for example.

**Katz:** So you had educational videos talking about self-defense tactics women could use to fight off potential rapists.

**Film clip:** Nobody's Victim (1972)

Some people carry tear gas, mace, horn alarms, and even hair spray for self-defense.

**Katz:** They were essentially public safety-type education campaigns.

**Film clip:** Nobody's Victim (1972)

A good start is to only put your last name and initials on the mailbox. A strong lock is a good investment. If you have to walk alone at night, stay out in the open near light and people.

**Katz:** This was called prevention, but it was really risk reduction under the name of prevention.

Later, there's a whole new set of precautions that start to be laid out in prevention education campaigns. Don't put your drink down at a party, for example, because a guy might drop a rape drug in your drink.

**PSA clip**

One of these in her drink, she won't even know what hit her.

**Katz:** Again, notice how the focus is almost entirely on women -- what they can and should do to be safe and to avoid being raped.

**Film clip:** Date Rape: No Means No (1985)

You can't blame someone else's clothing for your own behavior. There's only one person who's responsible for your actions.

**Katz:** And when men and boys were focused on back in the day, it was almost always as perpetrators or potential perpetrators.

**Film clip:** Date Rape: No Means No (1985)

Attacking, because that's what it is, or hurting someone else, first of all, is a criminal act, and is able to be prosecuted. That's for openers.

**Katz:** And the problem with that focus on men and young men, is that most men don't see themselves in that way and they tune you out. And they shut you out and they think, I'm a good guy, I don't rape women, this isn't my problem. And my goal was to get guys to buy in. To get young men to think about ways in which they could be constructive parts of the solution.

## The MVP Bystander Approach

**Katz:** When I started the Mentors in Violence Prevention program in the early 90s, it was at a place called The Center for the Study of Sport and Society, which is an institution at Northeastern that had been created in 1984 with the idea of using the sports culture as a constructive way to address a range of social problems. The Center was known for addressing racism through the vehicle of sports. And you know, there's a huge history in the 20th century and 21st century of sport being used as a catalyst to address social issues and social problems. For example, Muhammed Ali who was the icon of the 20th century in using sport as a platform for his social justice activism and work.

**Muhammed Ali:** Policemen pull black people over and hit 'em across the head and unjustly try 'em in courts. And none of the "good" white folks can be found to help.

**Katz:** When Jackie Robinson stepped on the field for the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947, that wasn't just a moment in sports history, it was a moment in American history and therefore in world history because sports is much bigger than just the playing fields.

**Bobby Riggs:** No way a woman can play tennis with a good man tennis player. This is a battle of the sexes.

**Katz:** When Billie Jean King became an icon of women's strength in athletics.

**Billie Jean King:** Why shouldn't everyone have the opportunity? And the only way you can do it is by changing the system. /// People say, are you more proud of what you did on the court or off? Much more off the court. And I'm going to continue this until my last breath to try to fight for equality and freedom for all.

**Katz:** That was important beyond the sports culture itself because of what sports signifies.

And you know, when Colin Kaepernick took a knee and NFL players are taking a knee, that's an important development in an approach to activism that has a long and proud history in the 20th and early 21st centuries.

And when I approached Richard Lapchick, the director of the Center at the time, I knew all about this history. And my thinking was, where are we gonna find more men who have the courage and the strength to start standing up and speaking out against men's violence against women. Where are we gonna find more men and young men who will challenge and interrupt other men's sexism, at all levels, not just at the point of attack, but at all levels? Where are we gonna do that? Well, one place we're gonna do that is in the sports culture.

I wanted to work in the sports culture, not because there was a problem in athletics of male athletes assaulting women. My thinking was, where are we gonna find more men and young men who have the courage and the strength and the self-confidence to stand up and speak out on these matters. And if we get men who already have some status in their peer culture to speak out, it'll make it

more acceptable and easier for other men and young men to do so. So, I was thinking about using the sports culture in a very constructive way.

At the time, I had a professor in graduate school by the name of Ron Slaby, who along with his colleagues, was looking at an approach to middle school bullying prevention that moved beyond the perpetrator/victim binary. The goal was to get the kids around the kid doing the bullying to make it clear to that kid that what he or she was doing was not acceptable, not because they were gonna get in trouble with the authority figures, like some external agent of authority was gonna come into the peer culture and remove the offending party. But because the kids in the peer culture itself were gonna say to that kid and make it clear to that kid that what he or she is doing is unacceptable to the kids themselves. And that they would not tolerate that kind of abusive behavior. And they called that approach, the bystander approach.

And one of the beauties of that approach is that it gave us a really powerful thing to say to men and young men, who will often say, “This is not my problem.” “This is not my issue.” “I don't harass women.” “I don't abuse women.” “Some guys do, but not me. I'm a good guy.” It gave us a way to speak to those guys to say you do have something to do here. You are a part of the solution to this problem. We need you to start thinking about ways that you can challenge and interrupt abusive behavior at all levels by men and young men around you. That's the bystander approach.

So, the question was, how can we change the peer culture sort of support for abusive behavior, the kind of ways in which guys goad each other on; the way that guys enable each other's abusive behavior; but in particular, the way that men's silence contributes to perpetration of abuse. In other words, when men who are not happy with and who don't support abusive behavior remain silent in the face of it, how does that silence function as consent and complicity in the abusive behavior?

All of this informed our thinking in the early stages of the MVP program.

**Video clip:** Center for the Study of Sport in Society (2009)

MVP trainers are a diverse group of former college and professional athletes who are able to connect with current athletes in highly effective ways.

**Katz:** We didn't want to just reproduce the same old, same old focus on victims and potential victims and targets of harassment and abuse. And we didn't want to just focus on men as perpetrators and potential perpetrators. We wanted to expand the palette if you will; we wanted to expand the focus to all the men, in particular, who are in peer cultures with men who might be abusive to get them to speak up and challenge and interrupt abusive behavior by their peers, their teammates, their classmates, their fraternity brothers, and others.

**Video clip:** Center for the Study of Sport in Society (2009)

That's how we look at the bystander approach, which is it's not about you being a perpetrator, or you being a victim. It's about you changing the whole situation using who are. / It's not the easy thing to do. It's not the popular thing to do a lot of times. But what we always ask people to consider is it the right thing to do. We're not talking like the Superman, John Wayne, Rambo version of a bystander. It's ok, what are some thinking ways that I can deal with the situation that isn't gonna get anybody hurt. / A lot people don't take these type of situations serious until it hits home. When

it hits home, that's when it hits the hardest. So, I mean, if it was somebody else's mother, sister, daughter, you should always try to help.

**Katz:** So, we create these incredibly robust interactive dialogues. We don't have a Powerpoint presentation. We don't tell people what to think. Obviously, the trainers and the facilitators know a whole lot, but part of their goal is to get people to speak up and talk about real life situations. Why would somebody in this situation do this, but you would do that? What are some of the different approaches that you see in this room? And we get people to have dialogue and talk honestly about the complexities of race and ethnicity and sexual orientation and gender and how it's all intersecting and marbled together. And sometimes people disagree with each other. In fact, very often they disagree with each other. But I don't think that creating some false consensus is our goal. The goal is to get people thinking critically about the responsibilities to themselves and others.

Initially, the focus was on male peer cultures because if you're in a position to challenge and interrupt abusive behaviors by members of your group and you remain silent, then your silence is a form of consent and complicity in the perpetration of abuse by members of your group. So, for example, if you're a white person and you yourself don't act out in racist ways, but you don't challenge and interrupt other white people who are acting out in racist ways, in a sense your silence is a form of consent and complicity in their racism. Just like if you're a man and you're in a position to challenge and interrupt other men's sexism, but you chose to remain silent, then in a sense your silence is a form of consent and complicity in those men's sexism. That's the premise of the MVP bystander approach in working with men.

In the second year of the MVP model, this is, again, back in the early 1990s, we were being approached by all kinds of athletic directors and athletics officials in the groups that we were working with and they were saying, ok you're working with men, but what can we do with the women? Women have an important role to play, don't they? And how can we integrate women into this approach? So, we started focusing on women, not as the victims or potential victims of harassment, abuse, or violence, not as the perpetrators of that, but as bystanders. In other words, how can they be empowered to challenge, interrupt abuse and support victims and survivors. Because there's many ways in which women play a role in perpetuating some of the attitudes and beliefs that lead to abusive behavior. And so, in MVP sessions we help women think about the ways in which some of their attitudes and beliefs and behaviors contribute to the problem.

**News clip:** You know, whether female or male, they're gonna be bystanders to different situations. And really this training is about empowering them, giving them tools to stand up and be leaders in tough situations. And to sort of be the activists that change a culture on campus.

**Katz:** So, in that sense, all of us, men, women and then, of course, gender non-conforming folks, and everybody, how everybody in a given peer culture can play a constructive role in challenging abuse, in supporting victims and survivors, and helping to create a climate where the abuse doesn't take place in the first place.

And over the years, MVP has grown to work with all kinds of different sectors of society, including all branches of the United States military, in the corporate workplace, in the blue-collar workplace. It's in several countries, as well.

But an important distinction between our approach and some other approaches, is that we didn't just focus on the point of attack. In fact, what's happened in the field is that some people have moved toward a more bystander intervention model that is much more about the point of intervention. In other words, like if you see something, say something. Like the TSA in airports. The problem there is they leave out the underlying attitudes, beliefs and behaviors that are at the foundation of these abusive acts. And they just talk about the act itself and intervening at the point of attack. And I think that that, honestly, that is more like a glorified night club bouncer training. Now of course, we want people to speak up if they see an incident of harassment or abuse or a potential rape scenario taking place on their, in their college campus or some place. Of course, we want people to speak up. But to think that somehow that's the solution to just figure out ways to interrupt a rape in progress -- is absurd.

And I'll give you an example of some of the confusion people have about the term bystander intervention. It's the Stanford rape case.

**News clip:** Students at Stanford University are in shock tonight after hearing about an alleged rape on campus. The suspect, Brock Turner...

**Katz:** Brock Turner, who was a member of the swimming team at Stanford University, was assaulting this woman who was passed out, and two Swedish graduate students were riding their bicycles across campus. They saw what was happening and intervened.

**News clip:** According to university police, the witnesses chased him down, then restrained him until police arrived. / It's obviously really scary thing to hear that kind of stuff happens on campus, but I'm really proud of the students who stepped up and stopped it.

**Katz:** They didn't stop the rape from happening. The rape had already happened. But the point is, what is the theory, the educational practice, if you will, that flows from the example of the Stanford rape case? That we need more Swedish graduate students riding bicycles across campus because they might come across a rape? Because that clearly worked in that situation. I mean, it's silly. It's ridiculous. Of course, we want people to intervene at all points. But the idea that somehow that's the solution to this problem. That's like a form of whack-a-mole. You know, you see a situation that arise, you address it, you see another situation arise and you address it. As opposed to, let's talk honestly and openly about all the underlying dynamics that contribute to these problems.

## **Transforming Rape Culture**

**Film clip:** Rape Prevention (1977)

Rapists like dark and lonely streets where they can search out an unwary victim.

**Katz:** The old idea was that somehow individual perpetrators just came into town and did their nasty business and then retreated back into the darkness. That's such a naive way of understanding what is a much more systematic social problem, both here in the United States and all over the world. The idea that somehow this just comes out of nowhere or that just individuals are perpetrating it, but it has no connection to larger social norms and cultural norms, is absurd. That's why the concept of rape culture is so important and instructive.

**Video clips:** Hey baby, why don't you smile. That skirt is way too short. You shouldn't have had so much to drink. Real men always want to have sex. Loosen her up with a drink. Men can't be raped. Boys will be boys. Hey girl, your body is banging. Did you lead him on? She was totally asking for it. Listen why can't you take a compliment? Why didn't you fight back? /// America, we need to talk about rape culture. One in five women are sexually assaulted...

**Katz:** The concept of rape culture is that there are various attitudes, beliefs and behaviors that are marbled into normative social practice in a given society. One of the things we used to illustrate this is a pyramid. Imagine the tip of the pyramid is an incident of sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic violence, or relationship abuse. But the base of the pyramid is a set of attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that create the cultural context and foundation for that abusive act to take place. The real hard work, is focusing not at the tip of the pyramid, but at the base, where it gets more messy down there.

Most people will agree "well, if I see a rape of course I'm going to intervene, if I see my guy friend beating up his girlfriend of course I'm going to do something about it. But then you say well what about when he makes a sexist comment, what about when your guy friend does something that you can see clearly is part of the problem, but it's not an actual incident of violence and abuse. Would you then challenge him on that? And a lot of guys will push back on that and say well no, I really wouldn't say anything on that situation. But we're trying to get them to think about how if you don't challenge people at the lower levels, if you don't challenge people who make sexist comments, who make dismissive comments about girls or women, then in a sense, you're helping to sustain the culture that produces that abusive act at the tip of the pyramid.

The other point here is it's not just about rape itself. Rape is on the extreme of a continuum of behaviors. Cat calls on the street.

**News clip:** No cat calling signs like this one are popping up all over New York City. So, what are your thoughts on cat calling? / You know sometimes, you know, you gotta call a girl. You gotta, you know, [cat calls, whistles] you know, something like that. / How would you call a dog? / [Whistles] Same way.

**Katz:** Groping and unwanted touch on public transportation.

**Video clip:** This guy just straight up grabbed my ass. / He pushes me against the wall and he grabs my breast. / The next thing I know, I feel a hand up my skirt. / I pushed him away, I said what the hell do you think you're doing? / I pushed him away from me with all my force. / And he looks at me. He stares at me in the eye with this smirk. / And he looked at me and he smirked at me. / And he just sort of smiled smugly and walked away. / And I think that most women who've been

assaulted know this look, which is the "I'm getting off on you being uncomfortable." / Basically like, "I just did that to you and I can and there's nothing you can do about it."

**Katz:** We also have victim-blaming more generally.

**News clips:** She is leaving her home at one a.m. in the morning. And nobody forced her to drink. What did she expect to happen at one a.m. in the morning after sneaking out? I'm not saying that she deserved to be raped, but... /// This guy thinks the cat call was our model's fault. But when Lisa wanted to ask him what he meant... / Sir, you just said that a lady was asking for it. / He didn't stick around. This guy did to tell us that he was upset we were recording the cat calls. / You got a woman walking around, looking to get, looking to get talked to, get somebody to say something. "Look what you did"! "Look what you did"! / Let me ask you a question. If that was your daughter, how would you feel about men yelling at her? / She wouldn't walk around, my daughter wouldn't walk around willing to get yelled at. My daughter would walk around conservatively dressed.

**Katz:** We also have unsolicited dick pics and revenge porn.

**News clips:** Revenge porn bust. A man accused of spending months stalking his ex-girlfriend online and posting her naked pictures. /// It's a betrayal of trust by technology. Intimate images shared on the internet without consent of those pictured. / Many of these women are having their photos sent deliberately to their employers, to their family members, to their co-workers, as a means of causing them harm. /// It's a very modern form of misogyny. And it's taking away control of our own bodies, control of images of our own bodies, which is what the women's movement has always been about. We get to decide what we're going to do with our bodies.

**Katz:** There's the kind of cyberbullying and sexual harassment that takes place online and social media.

**News clip:** For Anita Sarkessian, this is the new normal. Armed escorts at public events tracking her every move. All because this media critic dared to criticize something millions of us play everyday -- video games. Her goal? To bring attention to what she calls the inherent misogyny in the gaming world. / It gets worse and worse. It reinforces this idea of women as play things for their amusement. / And it's this kind of talk that makes her a target. / And that's when the cyber mob, right, the hate mob descended. / Bombarding her with mostly anonymous tweets and messages: "I will rape you when I get the chance." Hiding behind user names and claims of free speech. "I'm sitting outside your apartment with a loaded gun." "Your neighbors won't hear you screaming in pain."

**News clip:** Trolling is disturbing in itself, but when it's becoming a part of our public discourse that women are made fun of for their bodies, for their sexuality, and are diminished in that way because of that instead of being taken seriously, I think that's something for not just journalists or women to think about, but for us all to think about.

**TV clip:** 13 Reasons Why  
Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, they've made us a society of stalkers.

**Katz:** If you want to see just how powerful these dynamics are, just look at our entertainment culture. In show after show, you see what's it's like for young people to navigate the pressures of social media, especially the shaming that goes on around young women's sexuality.

**TV clip:** 13 Reasons Why

[Phone alert sound] Ok, everyone settle in. Today we're discussing ways to navigate difficult interactions. [Phone alert sound]

**Katz:** The pressures that social media have brought into kids' lives are so great that movies like *Unfriended* have turned our social networks into horror franchises.

**Film clip:** Unfriended (2014)

[Keyboard typing sounds, Screams] Why would you post that? / It's Laura.

**Katz:** With the rise of social media, peer cultures have now widened exponentially into cyberspace. So, young people now have to contend with a growing universe of sexism and misogynist statements online.

The bottom line is, there's so many behaviors that maybe fall short of rape, but are a part of rape culture.

**Charlamagne tha God:** I feel stupid that I am just now realizing that a lot of us men in America have been raised on rape culture.

**Katz:** And a lot of guys now get all of this.

**Charlamagne tha God:** Rape culture is perpetuated through the use of misogynistic language and the objectification of women's bodies and the glamorization of sexual violence. My brothers, if we are being morally honest with ourselves, if you're a certain age like I am, you were born in the late 70s or 80s or, hell, older than that, you were absolutely, positively raised on rape culture.

I don't care if it's Freaknik, Miami memorial weekend, Myrtle Beach, it was never normal to feel like you can grab a woman's ass, it was never normal to grab a woman's breast. Just because, you know, you saw in Dr. Dre's "Nuthin But a G Thang" video when the girl was playing volleyball and they ran up behind and pulled her bikini top off. If you've ever mimicked that kind of behavior, it wasn't normal. It was rape culture, ok?

Movies like *Revenge of the Nerds*.

**Film clip:** Revenge of the Nerds (1984)

I wanna do it.

**Charlamagne tha God:** Remember those where guys would dress up as other people in order to trick the women into having sex with them?

**Film clip:** Revenge of the Nerds (1984)

Take off your mask. You're so kinky. Aaah! You're that nerd. / Yeah.

**Charlamagne tha God:** That was rape culture. Remember Porky's?

**Film clip:** Porky's (1981)

When they're not in class, they're into everything. / They want us to look. They want us to look! / Porky's.

**Charlamagne tha God:** Remember sneaking up late to watch Porky's when they was drilling holes in the wall and peeping at the girls? I'm sorry, my brothers, all of that was rape culture. I feel bad and extremely dumb that I didn't realize this earlier in my life.

**Katz:** And again, you have to talk about the norms that produce those behaviors if you're going to really make substantive change. In fact, there's been a global consensus for a number of years that the most effective programming with men, young men, and boys on these matters is what's called gender transformative programming. Gender transformative programming means that you're allowing men, young men, and boys to think about ways in which cultural ideologies of manhood affect their attitudes, beliefs and behaviors, both towards women, towards other men, and towards themselves.

And yet, some of the people who run programs that want to prevent gender violence don't want to talk about gender. They just want to talk about how everybody has a role to play, but not talk about the underlying gender norms. To me, that's absurd. And I understand why. Because I think people are afraid of men getting defensive and pushing back.

**Ben Shapiro:** If you just say to me, you don't acknowledge the rape culture. Again, I need you to define that and I need you to explain to me what I did? Like really! Uh, I didn't do anything!

**Katz:** But if you don't engage this discussion. If it's gender neutral and you're only teaching them skills to intervene in situations of potential harm, you're not necessarily doing damage, but you're not being transformative. And I think in this moment in time in the 21st century, we need to be transformative. These are giant problems we're dealing with, both in the United States and all over the world. And if we're just keeping it at the surface, we're just skimming the surface, I think we're doing a disservice to young men, to young women, and we're not doing what we say we want to be doing, which is transforming the culture that produces abusive behavior.

## **Redefining Manhood**

**Film clip:** The Mask You Live In (2015)

Stop crying. Stop with the tears. Don't cry. Pick yourself up. Stop with the emotions. Don't be a pussy. Don't let nobody disrespect you. Be cool and be kind of a dick. Always keep your mind shut. Nobody likes a tattletale. Bros come before hos. Don't let your woman run your life. You're lit. What a fag. Get laid. Do something. Be a man. Be a man. Grow some balls.

**Film clip:** A Fistful of Dollars (1964)

[Laughter] / I don't think it's nice, you laughing.

**Katz:** For decades, the culture, especially our entertainment culture, has normalized and glamorized a definition of manhood that equates being a real man with the ability to impose your will on another person through your physical force and displays of dominance.

**Film clip:** A Fistful of Dollars (1964)  
[Gunshots, Horse neighing]

**Film clip:** The Godfather (1972)  
Godfather, I don't know what to do. I don't know what to do. / You can act like a man.

**TV clip:** The Last O.G.  
What does it mean to be a man? Being able to handle your business. A man don't cry. A man don't ask for help. A man don't even go to the doctor.

**Film clip:** Varsity Blues (1999)  
Never show weakness. The only pain that matters is the pain you inflict.

**Music video:** “Blurred Lines”  
You the hottest bitch in this place.

**Katz:** And we also have attitudes that glamorize sexual conquest by men, or the objectification of women.

**TV clip:** Game of Thrones  
I've begun the feast a bit early and this is the first of many courses.

**Katz:** And having sex with as many women as possible.

**TV clip:** Game of Thrones  
Since we're short on time, come on, girls. / [Laughter]

**Katz:** And at the same time, it's been the cultural norm to question the masculinity of guys who don't play the game.

**Film clip:** Scott Pilgrim vs. the World (2010)  
And you didn't bang her? Are you gay?

**Katz:** To make them somehow seem abnormal. Less than a real man.

**Film clip:** The 40-Year-Old-Virgin (2005)  
You're gay now? / No. I'm not gay. I'm just celibate.

**Katz:** As if the only way for a guy to be into women is to have sex with them.

**Film clip:** Anchorman (2004)

I think the best thing to do with this Corningstone, keep her in line, is bed her quick. / Oh, that behind is driving me loco! I'm like a night wolf. / Guys, take it easy. Just take it easy! She's got feelings, too. / Oh, my God! Listen to Burgundy. He's gone soft on us, like some schoolboy bitch. / You sound like a gay. [Laughter] / Hey! Come on!

**Katz:** And you see this kind of thing across media culture. Even in our political culture.

**News clip:** You know, the message I have, it's a very simple one. It's a bumper sticker, Sean. The era of the pajama boy is over January 20th and the alpha-males are back.

**Katz:** You see this on networks like Fox News where they absolutely love to sort of valorize so-called "alpha-males" and trash and ridicule so-called "beta-males."

**News clips:** Are you ready for the rise of the beta-male? Take a look at the latest cover of the Hollywood Reporter. / Hollywood and leftism wants to replace the alpha-male with this beta-male. / And look at that cover. I don't know if women are really attracted to beta-males. I certainly don't find them attractive. I'm married to a lumberjack, so I obviously like alpha-males. [Laughter] /// The modern beta-male wusses, and the feminist minds, they freak out and they form a mob and they go crazy.

**Katz:** But this isn't just pundits spouting off on cable news networks. This phenomenon extends to the most powerful sectors of our society, including the corridors of power in politics.

**News clips:** I like Trump because Trump is not a politician. He, uh, he talks like a guy. And ladies out there, this is what guys talk about when you're not around. So, if you're offended by it -- grow up! /// I did try and \*\*\*\* her. She was married. / A new video sending shock waves through the presidential race tonight. Donald Trump speaking in vulgar terms about his pursuit of women. / I moved on her like a bitch. And she was married. I'm automatically attracted to beautiful women. I just start kissing them. It's like a magnet. I don't even wait. Grab 'em by the pussy. You can do anything.

**Katz:** So, for example, we have Donald Trump who has made so many misogynist statements over the course of his public career.

**Trump:** We don't have tremendous fights. We should have record setting fights. But we really don't. We get along very well and there's not a lot of disagreement because ultimately Ivana does exactly as I tell her to.

**Megyn Kelly:** You've called women you don't like fat pigs, dogs, slobs, and disgusting animals. You once told a contestant on Celebrity Apprentice it would be a pretty picture to see her on her knees.

**Katz:** Trump is a guy who has perfected the art of performing a certain kind of throwback white masculinity that glamorizes sexism.

**Trump clips:**

I would say that she's in the four or five category. I view a person who's flat-chested it's very hard to be a 10. /// She gained a massive amount of weight and it was a real problem.

**News clip:** Donald Trump is being blasted today for insulting his rival Carly Fiorina's looks. / He is attacking the only Republican woman in the race, insulting the way she looks.

**Katz:** And people often talk about how, where are the Republicans? Where are the members of his own party who are willing to challenge Donald Trump, but they could see that if they challenged Donald Trump, that their manhood would be undermined in the way that Donald Trump, for example, undermined the manhood of his Republican primary competitors in the 2016 election.

**Trump clips:** Little Marco. He said, "we're going to build a wall. We're going to build a wall." /// Jeb wants to be, he wants to be a tough guy. And it doesn't work very well. /// I've met much tougher people than Ted Cruz. He's like little baby. Soft, weak little baby. /// He's a pussy. That's terrible. /// I could have said, "Mitt drop to your knees," he would have dropped to his knees. He was begging.

**Katz:** And so, in a very interesting way the entire society has had a glimpse at the dynamics of certain kinds of male peer cultures in the way that so many men, including powerful, white men have failed to challenge Donald Trump. In other words, there's plenty of men around Donald Trump. There's plenty of powerful men in the Republican party who know how toxic Donald Trump is, how misogynist he is, but they don't challenge him because they know that there's a consequence if they challenge him.

And it wouldn't be just Donald Trump who would be ridiculing them. There would be other pundits and other political actors and others, saying that the people who are criticizing Donald Trump were soft and weak. So, in a sense, this has been a teachable moment that's lasted two or three years now where we've seen in real time powerful men being policed into conformist silence with abusive behavior in very much the same way that plays out in high school peer cultures, on high school football teams, and college fraternities and military units and in, you know, workplaces large and small.

**Katz:** So, one of the most important things we do in MVP sessions is we take into account all these forces: the media culture, the porn culture, the influences of the political world and everything else, and have this be part of the discussion and we help people think about how we define manhood and womanhood, how gender norms operate, and intersect with race, class, ethnicity, sexuality. How power functions within these peer cultures and the larger society. How certain kinds of relationships and certain kinds of power relationships are normalized in media culture and porn culture. If you have of all that as your object of discussion of critical commentary, you're, I think, much more likely to come at positive transformative solutions.

## **The Courage to Lead**

**Katz:** The concept here is changing social norms and that might seem like an abstract concept, but there's many examples that we can see of how social norms have changed. Take cigarette smoking, for example.

**Archive clip:** Every day more and more people are discovering something extra in smoking pleasure.

**Katz:** For decades, we lived in a culture that made smoking not only seem perfectly normal, but also glamorous, fun, even healthy.

**Archive clip:** Yes, according to this survey, more doctors smoke Camels than any other cigarette.

**Katz:** As a result, cigarette smoking used to be much, much more common and people would do it in doctor's offices, on airplanes. It was extremely common, but what happened was the norms of the society changed as we became more educated and started to ask questions.

**PSA clip:** When friends don't stop friends from drinking and driving...

**Katz:** Another example, drunk driving.

**PSA clip:** Friends die from drinking and driving.

**Katz:** Starting in the 80s, you had this slogan, "Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk."

**PSA clip:** Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk.

**Katz:** So, in other words, they were saying to people who are friends of a person who might get behind the wheel of a car, it's actually a smart thing to do, it's actually an empowered thing to do, and it's actually a friendship thing to do, to take the keys away from your friend. And, in fact, these kind of campaigns have helped to shape and change the social norms of how we act and how we interact. So, the idea that somehow we can't do this with sexual assault or domestic violence or relationship abuse is not true. Now let me just say, it's a little more complicated when it comes to domestic and sexual violence issues. Because those aren't just about particular behaviors around the purchase and consumption of a product or smoking a cigarette. It's about gender identity and sexual identity, which is on a deeper level. And so, there's always going to be fierce blowback against people who are trying to challenge the rape culture and so-called toxic masculinity.

**News clip:** Macho men under attack on college campuses across the country. Now encouraging men to be less manly with courses to fight "toxic masculinity." / What could be toxic about all this?

**Katz:** You have a legion of people who love to caricature those who believe there might be larger cultural norms at play that help reinforce sexual abuse as somehow trying to bring down masculinity.

**News clip:** Basically, what feminism has delivered is angry women and feminine men. From the left, from the politically correct, we have all these attacks on men. It's a very hard time to be a man in today's society.

**Katz:** They'll be like, "what are you trying to do? Make men soft? Are you trying to make men weak?"

**News clip:** Wimps and wussies deliver mediocrity.

**Katz:** And I think this is ridiculous. We're not trying to undermine men's strength. We're trying to define strength differently. In other words, if strength is just the ability to impose your will on another person through your physical force and displays of dominance, is that really your understanding of strength in the 21st century? Are you kidding me? Strength is about strength of character. Strength is not just physical courage, it's moral courage. It's social courage. It's having the strength to stand up to bullies. It's having the strength even when your voice is cracking to say to your friend "hey, dude, the way you're talking about girls or women is uncool. That takes great strength. And the idea that somehow we're undermining men's sense of themselves as powerful or leaders, is ridiculous. It has it literally, topsy turvy.

And in fact, you know, I always define the MVP model not as a bystander program, but as a gender violence prevention leadership program that uses the bystander approach as one of its tools. Because, you know what? A bystander who speaks up -- a teammate, a friend, a classmate, a colleague who interrupts or challenges another person's abusive behavior or even a sexist comment, is actually acting as a leader does.

**Video clips:** MVP means Mentors in Violence Prevention and it is a gender-based, education, and leadership program. /// One of the foundations that we try and lay from the beginning of any MVP session is to try and ground the group in the concept of leadership, but also the concept of what it means to be looking out for one another.

**Katz:** A bystander who speaks up, an active bystander, is not a soft person, by any stretch of the imagination. They're actually a leader. And you can be a leader even if you don't have a formal title as a leader. You can be a sixteen-year old kid who has no resume items whatsoever that make it look like they're a leader, but by speaking up, speaking truth to power, interrupting a sexist comment or a racist statement, or a homophobic statement, that's an act of leadership. Now, one example of men's strength and men's leadership we can see is General David Morrison who was the highest-ranking member of the Australian Army, second highest-ranking member of the Australian military. And there was a scandal that happened where a group of junior officers and junior enlisted leaders, all of them were men, were making a series of really sexist Facebook posts referring to their fellow female soldiers in completely derogatory, inappropriate and sexually degrading ways.

**News clip:** Tonight the ABC 7:30 revealed that hundreds of abusive messages had been posted on a private Facebook site used exclusively by more than a thousand current and former Australian soldiers. / \*\*\*\* fodder for the enemy. You break contact drill, leave female soldier behind wearing

bikini. Lol. / Don't worry about what the enemy will do to them... / If you're on Ops and get rubbish, who carries the tampons and sanitary napkins bag?

**Katz:** General Morrison made a video-taped statement, in response to the scandal, that went out to all the members of the Australian Army, in response, and then it went viral beyond. And he said some very powerful things in his statement.

**General David Morrison:** Those who think that it is ok to behave in a way that demeans or exploits their colleagues, have no place in this army. On all operations, female soldiers and officers have proven themselves worthy of the best traditions of the Australian Army. They are vital to us, maintaining our capability now, and in to the future. If that does not suit you ... then get out! You may find another employer where your attitude and behavior is acceptable, but I doubt it. The same goes to those who think toughness is built on humiliating others. Every one of us is responsible for the culture and reputation of our army and the environment in which we work. If you become aware of any individual degrading another, then show moral courage and take a stand against it. No one has ever explained to me how the exploitation or degradation of others, enhances capability, or honors the traditions of the Australian Army. The standard you walk past is the standard you accept. That goes for all of us, but especially those, who by their rank, have a leadership role. If you're not up to it, find something else to do with your life. There is no place for you amongst this band of brothers and sisters.

**Katz:** "The standard you walk past, is the standard you accept." That's General Morrison's articulation of the bystander approach. You don't see very many men making a strong statement like that, which is to say there are certain standards you're going to be expected to adhere to, and if you don't you're going to be held accountable. Imagine if that wasn't exceptional, but it was normative to hear men talk like that. Imagine how much strength it would give to the young guys in college and high schools who are on a daily basis confronted with situations where they know things are wrong, but they don't want to say anything because they don't want to be called soft or wimps or taking the other, the women's side in the battle between the sexes. In other words, all the ways in which boys and men are silenced in their peer culture. I'm telling you I think we would see radical diminution of abusive acts.

You know, there's a great quote from Martin Luther King that I think brings this all together. He said, "In the end, what'll hurt the most is not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends."

And I think a lot of people, including a lot of men, including men by the way in sports culture, in military culture, in fraternity culture, in traditional male culture in other words, a lot of men get all of this. In other words, they know that they are being policed into conformity with certain kinds of normative behaviors. If you change those norms and you start identifying the people who speak up and challenge those norms as actually the leaders, the strong people, the most self-confident people, then you're heading into the territory that we want to be in, which is you're really beginning to question some of those underlying norms and you're starting to empower people in these peer cultures to take a stand against abuse, harassment and violence.

[END]