

# GIRLTALK

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2019

## the WOMEN in POWER ISSUE



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# WELCOME TO GIRLTALK

Dear Readers,

In our previous March issue, our letter concluded with an inspiring prediction from Oprah of “a new day on the horizon.” Though the fight for gender equity is far from over, today, with a record number of women serving in the United States 116th Congress and a new wave of dynamic female leaders, we are reenergized more than ever to keep fighting.

“Women in Power” is GirlTalk’s 10th issue. It explores power dynamics through articles that speak about leadership roles in all-girls schools to a 7th grader’s reflection on what it means to be a “Girl Boss”. In a global questionnaire, girls from China, India, the USA, and more, reflect on their interpretations of what characterizes a woman in power and her role in promoting women in leadership positions. In this issue, GirlTalk is also excited to highlight specific women in power, with a feature on the leaders behind the Pad Project working to raise awareness of menstrual inequality as well as the profiles of female politicians set to create transformational change in Congress and perhaps even the 2020 US Presidential Race. With interviews of women with leadership positions in schools and corporations, GirlTalk’s 10th issue discusses what it means for girls to demand what they deserve and never settle. Furthermore, aside from advice on advancing one’s own hopes and aspirations, the “Women in Power” issue engages in analyzing what it means to be an ally in this era of change.

We hope you enjoy this jam-packed issue, with multiple perspectives, interviews, and more.

Love,

Eunice and Charlotte  
GirlTalk Co-Editors in Chief

## THROUGH A 7TH GRADE LENS

### “Girl Boss” vs. The Orange Dancing Donut

by Lola  
Brown

OAKWOOD  
SECONDARY  
SCHOOL

2018 was considered the “Year of the Woman,” a statement that inspires my mom to say, every time, without fail, “Why isn’t every year the year of the woman?” I can almost cue her up with a three-second countdown—which she thinks is “insolent,” by the way. (Yes, I had to look that up).

But, in thinking about the theme of this month’s Girl Talk, “Women in Power,” I recalled names like Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Alicia Garza, Christine Blasey-Ford, Emma Gonzalez, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Nancy Pelosi, Tarana Burke and the “ripple effects of the #MeToo Movement” and realized that, in her attempts to make me aware, I had been listening to my mother sharing information about the power of these women all along. Surprised at myself, I took a moment to think about that before deciding on what I should write about. My mother talks a lot. But to be more specific, she talks a lot about power and grace as if the two went together like milk

and cookies or Liza Koshy and David Dobrik. And given the opportunity of a “really good teachable moment,” she’ll turn to my brother and I and say, “blah, blah, blah, big words, big words, big words, there is power in grace...” That last part always sticks with me because even though I like the way it sounds, and kind of knew what she was trying to say, I wasn’t always sure if I could put what she meant into words—until now.

Every morning, my mother wakes up, rinses just enough sleep out of her eyes so she can see which buttons to push on the espresso machine, and grabs one of her two favorite mugs. I always know what kind of days it’s going to be when I see her enter my room with it. There’s the bright orange one with the white dancing donut, which means she’s in a mood to do something fun and we won’t know what it is until we get there. There’s also the black and white one that says “Girl Boss” printed in gold letter across the front, which

means her day is full of writing, meetings and phone calls to set up meetings to talk about writing. I enjoy seeing the orange dancing donut side of my mother for sure, who wouldn’t? But I also enjoy seeing the “Girl Boss” side, too, for different reasons. Watching my mother work is interesting and fascinating at the same time. She gets things done, means what she says, says what she means, and people respect her. And it’s not just because she’s really good at what she does, but she does it in a way that makes you want to do it just like her, or at least I do. I think that’s the “grace” part of it. When she talked about work I use to hear her say, with a little bit of pride, “I’m the only girl in the room.” I went to

work with her one day and understood what she meant as she lead me into a big room with about ten guys seated at a long table who sat at attention when she walked in. She introduced me before taking the only seat at the head of that table. That day was one of many that made me realize I wanted to be just like her—but dressed a little cooler, of course. And when I put it all together now, her words make sense. When we think about the power that women have always had, but only seem to be recognized for it every other year, I think about my mother as a “Girl Boss” and as that orange dancing donut and realize that power isn’t the only ingredient in the recipe that makes us successful, you have to add a little balance, hard work, humor and grace to everything you do. Maybe one day I’ll earn the privilege of using her “Girl Boss” mug, but for right now I’ve only earned the dancing donut, and that’s just fine with me!

*Until next time...*

# Female Leadership In An All-Girls Student Body

by Sophie Dorf-Kamienny  
MARLBOROUGH SCHOOL

I attend a high school where only girls comprise my class council. Girls also make up every editor on the school newspaper, and virtually every club leader and sports team captain. As you may have guessed, I am a student at a single-sex school.

Given the theme of this issue, I thought it fitting to discuss the significance of being a woman in power in an environment where nearly everyone in power is a woman. Although opinions on single-gender schools vary, many believe that in terms of leadership, all-girls schools allow female leaders to develop more effectively than in co-educational environments.

Ava Morgan, co-president of Marlborough School's Gay-Straight Alliance, voiced her opinion on society's avoidance of female empowerment. "I think that since there are a lack of women in leadership roles and a difference in the way the different sexes are raised, women might need more encouragement than men to take on leadership roles," Morgan wrote in an email. Consequently, Morgan believes that all-girls schools often provide some of the support and encouragement that is missing: "the absence of male 'competition' in leadership roles may make it easier for women to envision themselves as leaders and allow them to develop leadership skills... but such development is far from impossible in co-ed environments."

A 2012 study published by MIT reinforced the notion of the "role-model effect." The study indicated that in an area of India with a markedly higher percentage of female politicians, young women had more ambition in school and in career aspirations.

It's difficult to deny that this principle is at work in single-sex schools, where female leaders are present in all areas, including those

that have traditionally been male-dominated.

For example, research over the years clearly indicates an uptake in women seeking leadership in STEM fields, and statistics in all-girls schools are particularly impressive. Even 14 years ago, "74% agreed that girls' schools provide more encouragement in math, science, and technology" according to a [survey of all-girls schools alumnae from the National Coalition of Girls' Schools](#).

Nell Hawley co-leads Code Violet, a student organization focused on engagement in computer programming at Marlborough School. Hawley attests that there is a passion for computer science amongst young women in her club, despite the fact that the profession has been historically male-dominated.

"I have really enjoyed my experience as a club leader, not because I am at an all-girls school, but instead because this community has a strong interest in coding," Hawley said in an email.

"For me, it's more about the emphasis on girls' empowerment... which is something you don't get in a co-ed school," Marlborough Model United Nations president Ellie Surman said. "It's not like you are unprepared to be in the real world. Rather, you are prepared, with a sense of your own identity."

Some claim that thriving in an all-girls' school doesn't prepare you for the real world, where it is impossible to avoid competition with men. However, I would argue that from the experiences of myself and my peers, having built a strong foundation in an all-girls' school is what encourages many women to aspire to positions of power in the first place.



# The Pad Project AND

# Period. End of Sentence.

by Mason Maxam  
OAKWOOD SECONDARY SCHOOL

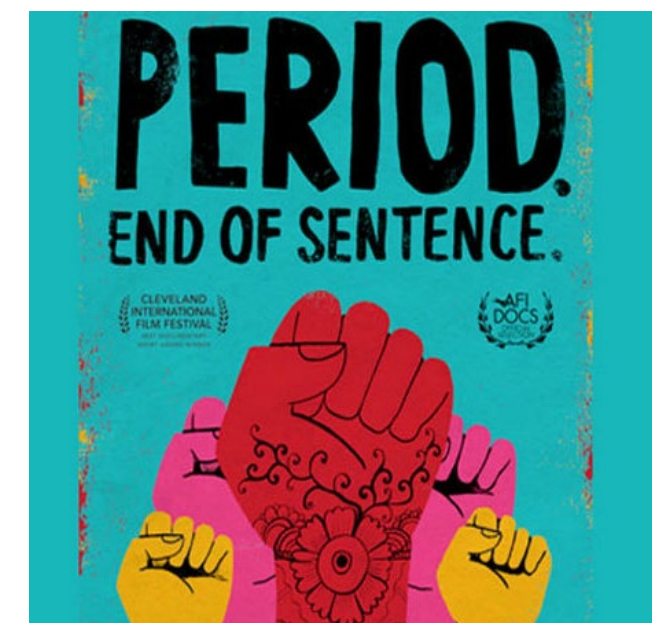
Around seven years ago my English teacher Melissa Berton and her daughter Helen Yenser came up with what seemed like an impossible idea. They wanted to purchase a pad machine for a village and create a documentary to raise awareness about period inequality. Many women and girls in developing countries don't have access to menstrual products such as pads and tampons when they are on their periods.

The inaccessibility of these products causes many problems. Because girls don't have pads, they turn to things such as ashes and rags. This causes infections. Beyond that, girls end up missing a week of school every month. Eventually, they fall so far behind they have to drop out. However, there is a new invention that solves this problem. A man named Muruganantham created a machine that makes affordable, biodegradable pads from locally sourced materials.

Better still, the machine does more than just supply girls with pads: it supplies a steady income to the women in the area who want to work on the machine. When Melissa and Helen learned about this issue they were also provided with a solution.

The only problem is that one machine plus a year of raw materials costs eleven thousand dollars. Not only did they need funding for the machine, but they also needed funding for the documentary. A few years later after doing much research, Melissa enlisted the help of Oakwood students (now graduated) to launch a Kickstarter campaign. Kickstarter helped them raise around sixty thousand dollars and provided students and Melissa the connections they needed to put their idea into motion. A year later, the pad machine was installed in a small village outside of Delhi called Kathikera. With the help of Action India and Sikhya entertainment,

The Pad Project was able to send a director, Rayka Zehtabchi, and a Director of Photography, Sam Davis to India to film the implementation of the machine. The now finished film which is around thirty minutes long, follows the women who work on the machine and sees them slowly breakdown the stigma around menstruation. We also see an open educational dialogue begin



about the biological reason behind periods. After the completion of the film, Oakwood students were able to travel to India and screen the film for the women who work on the machine. Since then, the film, *Period. End of Sentence.*, has traveled to around twenty film festivals racking up around ten awards.

Just two weeks ago *Period. End of Sentence.* was nominated for best film in the short documentary category. The documentary will be on Netflix in the upcoming weeks! The Pad Project, which is now an official non-profit, hopes to continue their relationship with the women in Kathikera as well as supplying more pad machines for villages worldwide.

For more information,  
visit [www.thepadproject.org](http://www.thepadproject.org)

# The New Wave of Female Politicians: What You Should Know

by Charlotte Kramon, Teva Corwin, and Eunice Park

Last month, in January 2019, a record number of women became governors, congresswomen, and senator in the U.S. In fact, over 90 women headed over to D.C.! GirlTalk co-editors-in-chief Charlotte and Eunice and staff writer Teva compiled some essential information about a few of the many women set to take power this year and lead the way in politics, including potential 2020 candidates.



**Kirsten Gillibrand**

Often called out for her dramatic shifts to the left on key Democratic issues, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) [declared that as a presidential candidate](#), she wants to fight for other people's kids just like she does for her own. This means that healthcare should be a right, public schools should be excellent, and there should be better job training for middle-class citizens.

However, Gillibrand added, "You're never going to accomplish any of these things if you don't take on the systems of power that make all of that impossible."

Important things to know:

Gillibrand is a huge critic of Trump. She's voted against his legislation more than any other senator, and [accused his immigration policy of being "racist"](#) and an example

of him "destroying" the country's "moral fabric."

Speaking of immigration, many people have pointed out her shift to the left on the issue. As a house member, Gillibrand opposed amnesty for undocumented immigrants, calling them "[illegal aliens](#)." On the Senate, she's called for reform and a path to citizenship. When CNN's Jake Tapper [asked about this policy shift](#), Gillibrand said that when she met the people affected by the issue, she realized the things she said were not "empathetic" and ultimately wrong.

Gillibrand was the first person to call for Sen. Al Franken's (D-Minn.) resignation following sexual assault allegations. Despite backlash, she stayed firm in her belief that those with histories of misconduct should not be in power.

The NRA went from loving Gillibrand to hating her. After meeting victims of gun violence, she moved to the left as an avid fighter for gun control.

She's a major advocate for the LGBTQ community. Gillibrand [voted to repeal the "don't ask, don't tell" policy](#) preventing gays and lesbians from participating in the military and has also pushed legislation to stop discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.

## Kamala Harris

Sen. Kamala Harris (D-CA), the second African American woman on the Senate, announced she was running for president on Martin Luther King Jr. Day. "[The core of my campaign is the people](#)," Harris said, adding that she is prepared to embrace the responsibility of tirelessly fighting for the country.

As a DA in San Francisco, she has consistently taken liberal stances on issues such as criminal justice reform, raising the minimum

wage, single-payer healthcare, free college tuition for low-income people, the environment, pay gaps, corporate misbehavior, LGBTQ rights, and more. Her [LIFT the Middle Class Act](#) is one of many proposals by other politicians that would [benefit low-income families](#). She is a major advocate of affordable housing and has one of the most daring proposals of her party.

Harris describes her approach to criminal justice reform as "[smart on crime](#)." Rather than reducing sentencing and punishment, the "smart on crime" approach focuses on minimizing violence and aggression while punishing criminals. Additionally, she has repeatedly proven her [strict intolerance for the death penalty](#) despite criticism for such a position.

The government shutdown is a [disgrace in Harris's mind](#). After a divided house and Senate finally came together on a plan to fund the government, Trump shut down the government. Not only were hundreds of thousands of workers working without pay, Harris lamented, but the destruction of a rare bipartisan moment illustrates the selfishness of our president.

Harris has faced backlash for her back-and-forth stance on the death penalty. While she frequently spoke out against it as a DA, some of her actions and enacted legislation go against that belief.



## Stacey Abrams

A [brilliant storyteller](#), Abrams ran for governor in Georgia, emphasizing her experience as a lower-class child of color with parents who were blocked from the opportunity. In her [State of the Union rebuttal](#), she condemned Trump for his shutdown scheme that reinforced partisanship. Reagan and Obama, while enforcing immigration, understood the importance of being "compassionate." The message of her passion for a country of opportunity persisted throughout her speech.

Although Abrams narrowly [lost the race](#) to Republican Brian Kemp, she is nevertheless a rising star in the Democratic party. In Georgia, she considers herself a "pragmatist" as well as a liberal who has fought for public education, fair taxes, criminal justice, and more. She plans on running again, and until then [promises to continue her involvement in public policy](#) and aspires to motivate other black women to run for office positions.



## Katie Porter

On Sunday, October 28, I boarded a bus with a few students, teachers, and parents, and we made our way to California's 45th Congressional District in Orange County to canvass for a smart, passionate, and warm candidate for the US House of Representatives: Katie Porter. Katie Porter was running against incumbent Mimi Walters - an extremely conservative Republican who had won the past two elections by a significant margin.

Porter is a Professor of Law, a consumer protection attorney, and mom.

She is a major advocate for protecting working-class families from big banks and has [sought reforms that help families get a fair shake in our economy](#).

As we walked through the streets of Orange County with the hot sun beating on our necks, we were completely unsure of what the outcome of the election would be. We spoke to people on both sides of the aisle, and many who were undecided.

The uncertainty of which way the election would go continued on, even past election night. It was almost two weeks after the midterms when the result of the election was finally called, Katie Porter winning the seat. Porter was one of seven House seats in



California that were flipped from Republican to Democrat in the midterm elections.

In her first month in Congress, Porter has been [critical of Donald Trump, yet she strives to find common ground](#) with her colleagues differing political parties - especially because the district she represents is so politically divided.

Porter also joined the [Financial Services Committee](#), to put her extensive experience working with the country's economy to good use.

She is [https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/kyrsten-sinema-a-success-story-like-nobody-elses/2013/01/02/d31fadaa-5382-11e2-a613-ec8d394535c6\\_story.html?noredi](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/kyrsten-sinema-a-success-story-like-nobody-elses/2013/01/02/d31fadaa-5382-11e2-a613-ec8d394535c6_story.html?noredi)

## Alexandria Ocasio Cortez

Alexandria Ocasio Cortez is a rising star of the Democratic party, and an unapologetic, passionate force to be reckoned with. In a stunning political victory, she defeated 10 term Democrat Joe Crowley, seizing close to 60% of the votes in NY's 14th District. As a proud, working-class Latina from the Bronx, Ocasio-Cortez contributes her background growing up in a family who struggled to make ends meet, with her mother cleaning houses and her father running a small business, to her primary motivation behind her progressive, socialist views. Some of her beliefs include abolishing Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), reforming the criminal justice system, guaranteeing federal jobs, instituting Medicare for all, and establishing tuition-free college.

Alexandria Ocasio Cortez, already making history as the youngest member of the 116th Congress, has had a busy first month in Congress. She has proposed a "Green New Deal", a 10-year plan to invest in clean energy jobs and put money into renewable energy production, which is widely supported by Democrats including Democratic presidential candidates. Additionally, she has been named to the House Financial Services Committee, which she has spearheaded efforts for corporate accountability. She has demanded a reduction in the Department of Homeland Security funding, calling for oversight in detention facilities.

These are just a few of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's actions during only her first month in Congress. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is energized to, in her words, "fight for an unapologetic movement for economic, social, and racial justice in the United States."

## Deb Haaland

When Haaland was born in 1960, Native Americans did not have the right to vote in New Mexico. Although Native Americans in New Mexico received the right to vote in 1962, since then, Deb Haaland has had to conquer multiple obstacles fighting for her Native American community. Now, as her historic role as one of the nation's first Native American women in Congress, Deb Haaland is fighting for representation, equity, and accountability.

Haaland has asked Congress for oversight hearings on the epidemic of missing and murdered indigenous women across the nation. Additionally, she has petitioned for increased resources for tribal justice systems and efforts to combat climate change, which she states is one of the greatest threats to fragile tribal lands. Understanding the obstacles her own Native American community has faced in regards to voter identification laws, Haaland is determined to tackle voter suppression. In her role as a Congresswoman, Haaland hopes to channel her hard work ethic, inspired by her grandmother who used

to clean diesel train engines and working mother, to champion socially conscious, impactful change.



## Kyrsten Sinema

Kyrsten Sinema was born to defy her own limits. She grew up in Arizona, in a family always struggling to make ends meet - leaving her [homeless for over two years](#). She claims that [education was her ticket to a better life](#). In winning an incredibly close election for a seat in the midterm Senate race, Sinema

made history as the first-ever bisexual member of the US Congress, Arizona's first ever female Senator, and Arizona's first Democratic Senator in over twenty years.

Not only is Sinema a fierce competitor in political races, but she is also an avid triathlete. Not only does competing in triathlons keep her both [physically and mentally healthy](#), but in her time in office, she has used her training to [deepen relationships with people across the aisle](#). During the government shutdown, Sinema had to go on an eighteen-mile run to prepare for the upcoming Phoenix Marathon. She convinced some of her senatorial colleagues to run part of the eighteen miles with her and used that time to talk to them about how to solve the immense problems that government shutdown lead to.



**demand what you deserve**

An Interview with [Susan Rovner](#), Executive Vice President, Creative, Warner Bros. TV and Co-President Warner Horizon Scripted Television

by Alyse Rovner

OAKWOOD SECONDARY SCHOOL

**S**usan Rovner is the definition of hard work, determination, power, and success. Rovner values hard work and has been working at Warner Brothers for over 21 years. She started off as Director of Drama development and has truly worked her way up to the top. As Executive Vice President, Creative, Warner Bros. TV and Co-President Warner Horizon Scripted Television she works on and oversees "61 plus shows." Rovner works on Westworld, Riverdale, Chilling Adventures of Sabrina, Supergirl, The Flash, Arrow, Queen Sugar, Claws, a new spin-off of Pretty Little



Liars called The Perfectionists, Shameless, Big Bang Theory, You, and many more TV shows at Warner Brothers Television.

But achieving this great success has not been easy for her and she has faced many challenges on her journey because of those who doubted her ability because she was a woman. For example, Rovner said, "At different points in my career I have been told I wasn't getting promoted because 'I wear skirts' and that I was paid 'pretty well for a girl' and that I was being passed up for a promotion because I put my family before my boss."

Rovner persevered against these challenges and did not let this sexism inhibit her future. The confidence she had in her own ability and her own acknowledgment of her worth would allow her to reach success. Rovner lives by the theory that "success is the best revenge. The more success you achieve, the more power you have to set a different tone and effect real change." And as she has "risen in the industry, (she has) done just that."

Rovner recalls a story that has been vital to her experience in the industry.

"Many years ago I attended a woman's leadership conference offered by TimeWarner, where I met a woman that told me about the Tiara Syndrome. The Tiara syndrome is when women work extremely hard, and keep their head down and hope and pray someone will put a tiara on their head, and give them what they had been working for (a promotion, etc.). Something, that, I myself had believed would happen if I worked hard. Unfortunately,

that never happens. Keeping your head down and working hard is not enough. You also have to lift your head up, you need to look around and you need to demand what you want and demand what you deserve. No one is just going to make you Queen unless you ask and demand it. Realizing this changed the entire trajectory of my career. I realized I had to make my intentions known to those around me and ask for what I wanted (in addition to working hard of course)."

**Keeping your head down and working hard is not enough. You also have to lift your head up, you need to look around and you need to demand what you want and demand what you deserve.**

Rovner works hard and uses her voice to enact change within the company as well as her career. She puts emphasis on helping to mentor women and has been a vital part

of the program Femtors, a program for mentoring younger women in the television and film industry. In addition to being a mentor, Rovner brings in many "new voices and talent to Warner Brothers. We (Warner Brothers) recently made a big deal with Ava DuVernay. On Queen Sugar, we only hire female directors. All the heads of the creative departments and my direct reports are women. We are hiring many more diverse executives and talent." Rovner has shown her dedication to helping others and expanding representation in media at Warner Brothers through bringing in new voices and talent.

Rovner talked about the sexual harassment that exists in Hollywood, and how this has been pushed to the surface through "Times Up."

She was aware these problems existed within the television and film industry and that although she is "not involved with the movement directly, (she) supports the movement fully."

She has seen great change at Warner Brothers because of the movement, because "people are encouraged now to report if something occurs, and before many people had been scared." Rovner also says that "if investigations prove the allegations to be true, action is now being swiftly taken."

Rovner believes that "a safe working environment is of the utmost importance" and is relieved that this "is now being taken very very seriously." Rovner has seen Warner Brothers change for the better because "people are more careful and more polite and more aware."

Continuing on, Rovner imparted some words of advice.

To all the young women who are trying to get involved in the television industry, "don't be afraid to ask for what you want. I mean this in terms of promotions, salary and where you see yourself going in the company."

Rovner is an inspiration and has taken initiative to promote change at Warner Brothers.

She is not only the definition of hard work but also a representation of what it means to speak your mind and never settle. Rovner has accomplished so many amazing things and I cannot wait to see the amazing things she will continue to do in the future.

# Women in Debate: Creating *Beyond Resolved*

by Sarah Catherine Cook  
ALTAMONT SCHOOL  
(ALABAMA)

**T**he thing that was crazy about starting my website and organization Beyond Resolved, a platform for femxle voices in debate, is that I definitely WAS NOT a likely person to do so. I live in the biggest city in Alabama, which is still pretty small compared to other big cities and had only known what national circuit debate was for about a year. That's pretty insignificant compared to the kids who had heard the words "Tournament of Champions" (the major national championship) for the past four years, or maybe even longer.

Being a national circuit debater is scary and demanding for everyone. Thousands of kids across the country spend hours every day researching and writing to try to get a 4-2 record in prelims to qualify for "outrounds" at a tournament. "Breaking", or making it to elimination rounds, is seen as a big accomplishment for younger teams, as they idolize the country's "favorite" debaters. These debaters win massive tournaments and give seemingly flawless speeches. But, I was not one of those debaters when I started Beyond Resolved; in reality, I could barely make it to elims, had about three debate friends, and was pretty anxious about myself as a debater.

Everything had changed a few months before I started Beyond Resolved. As I wrote in my most recent blog post, it's often hard to immediately attribute implicit actions to sexism; I'm definitely not one who LIKES to think that bad things are attributed to gender, and never want to falsely call something sexism. But once I saw it happening on a larger scale, it became hard to ignore the facts: Often, issues that affect many people disproportionately affect femxle debaters. I had heard teammates and other male debaters attribute my success to luck, telling me they hated the way my voice sounded when I spoke in round, seen circles of guys close right as I walked up, and watched my own teammate be excluded from research groups and group chats with echoes of her partner "carrying" her in round.

It's no secret anymore that womxn in debate experience sexism; statistics don't lie. At every tournament, there are significantly less womxn in outrounds, and significantly more womxn dropping out of the activity. Guys are always the ones who get the recognition, the opportunities, the "clout" and fame. The thing that clicked for me, and for many other femxles, was seeing it happen across the country and across different circuits. From Alabama, to New York, Texas, and California, the same issues were happening at all kinds of tournaments and debate programs. If you have any interest in reading some of the personal experiences of womxn in the debate community, you can check out [beyondresolved.org/shame/](http://beyondresolved.org/shame/). The biggest issue I saw was that womxn felt isolated from each other, and didn't know that others were experiencing the same issues.

Though I never thought my website would actually be a success, my debate partner and I started it on a whim this summer as part of an effort to

connect and empower womxn in the community. Though many womxn had spoken about experiences with sexism on different platforms, there had never been a platform that "did it all." That is what we wanted to create: a central hub for womxn in Public Forum Debate. I remember the day it first started. I sat there watching the views climb in anticipation because I was so nervous about whether people would like it. Luckily, it's been climbing ever since, with us reaching 20,000 views just the other day. Here is a brief list of our initiatives: we run a mentor program, run an active blog, are currently hosting an online and completely free tournament for female presenting/identifying or non-binary people, have an anonymous submissions page, run a hall of fame to calculate statistics from tournaments and celebrate femxle success in the activity, and sell some merch on the side.



None of this happened without a few bumps in the road. Being somewhat "moderate" about issues, I have received criticism from all spectrums about how I run the website. From people saying that Beyond Resolved discriminates against men, to saying that we assume gender by trying to calculate statistics of how many female presenting people are in outrounds, there is definitely never a boring day. But, to take my own side, I think that the way that we run the website has made it accessible to the most amount of people. There is no "men are trash" narrative that haters associate with feminism, and we don't rush to conclusions about any forms of gender-based discrimination in debate. I've learned a lot about

how to handle criticism. I need to be willing to negotiate but also stand strong in what I believe to be the best path for the organization.

My favorite part about the whole experience of running the website is gaining a new connection to the womxn around me. I've started to take notice and feel proud of other womxn doing great things, especially for programs and people who endorse womxn supporting other womxn. Of course it feels really good to receive messages from femxle debaters telling me that the website makes them feel supported, gives them a voice, or gives them friends in the activity. Personal favorites of mine were one freshman who thought someone definitely older than me ran BR (we love professional emails!), and someone else telling me they were "honored" that I commented on their Instagram post (very sweet but also very funny). But what feels even better is being able to feel like I'm making an impact on the community I love. I've realized that you don't have to have it all going for you to start something or be the person to make change; you just have to be willing to put energy and time into something you care about.

Being a femxle leader in the community has definitely been a big step for me, as sometimes it feels like the entire world is watching. I feel pressure to do well at tournaments so younger womxn in debate can look up to me as a debater as well as an advocate, almost as if my voice wouldn't matter as much if I lost more rounds. I also feel pressure from the community because so many big debate organizations have announced their support for us that I never want to "ruin it" or fail, as that would mean losing them. I also feel pressure to make the right decisions.

Everything that happens on the website reflects on me, and everything that I do reflects on the website. It's something that takes care, but also takes being careful. But, I think we all should be more careful, not as womxn, but as human beings. These days I see less and less of explicit sexism, but more and more of implicit forms of it: things that cannot necessarily be easily ascribed to gender unless seen from a larger perspective.

We, as human beings, should all take the time to point out the subtle issues we see in a way that is not combative, but productive and understanding, as that is the way that we can actually promote productive change. I think that's what Beyond Resolved is all about: pointing out the things that are wrong and right without pushing blame at any specific person or group, and finding ways to fix them.

## gLOBAL QUESTIONNAIRE

### *What characterizes a woman in power?*

"A woman in power is strong. She is loyal to her community and loving to her neighbors."  
16 year old girl from Guatemala

"I think a woman in power is distinguished by her sacrifice. Though it shouldn't have to be this way, in order for a woman to achieve a level of power, she often has to sacrifice many things in order to please society that expects double standards from her."  
18 year old girl from China

"Honesty."  
16 year old girl from India

"I don't think there's any singular personality trait that characterizes a woman in power. It's definitely a combination, with some traits being moral courage, resilience, and passion."  
17 year old girl from USA

### *How can society uplift women in leadership positions?*

"Maybe we should stop holding women to an impossible standard. It's sad how much the media obsesses over every move and choice of women who are public figures, especially celebrities and artists."  
16 year old girl from South Korea

"Change starts within our own community. In order for society to uplift women in leadership positions, we need to start embodying the role models we want to see. Women need to support each other, and men need to step up and realize that women's rights are human rights too."  
18 year old girl from India

"We need to see more representation in the media. Real representation of real women of all body types, backgrounds, and more, so that all girls can find inspiration to pursue their hopes and dreams."  
17 year old girl from USA

# BEING AN ALLY

by Sophie Friedberg  
PALISADES CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

The wave of 'what it means to be an ally' has taken elementary, middle and high schools by storm. It is no longer acceptable to think that because someone isn't actively being a bully, they are removed of all blame. This has started the conversation of what it means to be an ally.

Merriam-Webster dictionary says an ally is "one that is associated with another as a helper: a person or group that provides assistance and support in an ongoing effort, activity, or struggle."

This means that if you see something, you say something. No longer will society watch silently as bullies terrorize their victims. It's clear that teens and tweens are bullied on multiple platforms, whether that be verbal, physical or cyber. This issue has been addressed in a multitude of different ways, such as campaigns, commercials or in-school assemblies. The less addressed issue is what

to do when people in power are victims of bullying. Because individuals in powerful positions oftentimes have their personal lives on display, it encourages online haters to feel more comfortable tearing them down. Famous individuals are likely to show the highlights of their lives to their fans. It is increasingly rare that a celebrity will post about real struggle or issues in their lives. With the notion that celebrities or people of power have no 'real problems,' it encourages critics to harass them at an increasingly vicious rate.

Among these most frequently attacked are females in power positions, especially positions that some close-minded individuals have reserved for a man.

Women political figures, CEO's and other titles of high power are the most highly penalized because unfortunately, many Americans still feel uncomfortable seeing a woman in a job that used to be predominant-

ly male-occupied. This outdated thinking gives bullies motive to criticize... and who better to criticize than a celebrity? They're too busy, they'll probably never even see it, right? Wrong! Countless celebrities have spoken out about what fame and the repercussions that come along with it have done to their mental wellbeing.

Women in high places deal with hatred on a daily basis, thinking, at this point, it's part of the job, you have to have thick skin. But why should they have to have thick skin? Why is it that hatred is just part of the outfit?

This generation must be the one that stops bullying for everyone, not just for those out of the spotlight. We must all learn to be allies. This can look different for everyone, but the main point has been for years, and still stands today: if you see something, you say something, and if you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all.

by Cece Sturman  
BLAIR ACADEMY

Since preschool, I have gone to a series of progressive schools in Los Angeles—one of the most liberal cities in America, if not the most. My parents, both die-hard liberals, raised my sister and me to be strong Democrats who always speak up for the underdog. That is why I felt like a fish out of water during the first couple weeks of the East Coast boarding school I started this year, Blair.

During school meeting there were announcements for the "Young Republicans Club" and the "Christian Fellowship", two things I had never heard of. I actually turned to the girl next to me after the YRC announcement and asked if it was a joke. She said no.

I later found out that her boyfriend was a Trump supporter and member of the club. I was constantly voicing my opinions off-handedly, assuming everyone felt the same way. I had inadvertently marginalizing myself, the exact opposite thing a new kid wants to do, especially a

new sophomore at a school where everyone already has friends.

Before this year I did not think that I could be friends with a Republican, and definitely not a Trump supporter. I thought that a person's political beliefs defined them morally. But I don't think that's true anymore.

Political views come from a very complex thinking process, with factors such as race, gender, family background, geological location, and a million other little things playing

into it. A person's political opinions don't have to define them. More often than not, people you cut off based on your own biases could actually have been a great friend.

My first friend at Blair has parents who work for Trump. She is a Republican. When she told me, I felt blindsided and hurt. We spent an hour talking about this, and I slowly started to come to terms with the fact that I was the one who was wrong.

As Gandhi said: "man is not capable of

knowing the absolute truth, therefore, not competent to punish." I may disagree with someone's opinions, but that doesn't mean it is my place to correct or judge them.

I still believe that if every person were truly educated, they would have the same opinions I do, otherwise there is something wrong with their morals. I am working on that bias. I am trying to not only tolerate, but accept people's beliefs. And I think I have become a better person for it.

## Why We Need to Be Encouraging Girls to Go into STEM | Opinion

by Amira Bhasin

What does STEM stand for? The answer is science, technology, engineering and mathematics. A new initiative, steam, aims to use art and design in STEM education as well.

Unfortunately, there is a clear lack of representation for women like us in these fields. Whatever the reasons are (stereotypes, bias, lack of encouragement), I believe that women can be the face of science and innovation.

I'll tell you why it's important for girls to go into STEM. We all know about the wage gap between women and men. Currently, women make on average 80 cents for every 1 dollar that men earn. In some states, it is even worse. For example, in Wyoming, women are only paid 64% of what men earn. Unfortunately, more and more studies are starting to show that America, although a developed, productive and powerful nation, unfortunately has one of the worst gender gaps in the world.

What many don't realize is that a shortage of women going into STEM will only continue to increase the wage gap. According to Time Magazine, STEM graduates are projected to have the highest pay than any other major. With a large increase in companies and influential organizations putting more funding, resources and time into tackling large and complex scientific problems, this means that more high-paying jobs, accomplishments and recognition will go to men.

Obviously, this contributes to less female

role models in STEM fields. STEM is becoming more essential around the world, and there is a concern that an absence of female figures in these significant fields will only further the false notion/stereotype that women are not capable or cut out to do high-paying and high-thinking work.

So, why don't more girls go into STEM? Sadly, not every school encourages girls to get involved in these fields or consider them as career options, so you might have to find the encouragement elsewhere. You may think women haven't been successful in these lines of work because society doesn't always acknowledge or highlight them. The recent and acclaimed movie, *Hidden Figures*, told the true and untold story of three African-American women and their influential role with NASA in orbiting the moon. Ada Lovelace was a British mathematician and the world's first computer programmer. Check out [this link](#) for more about women throughout history involved in science and technology.

Today, there are women aiming to close the gender gap. Chelsea Clinton tours America and organizes events to encourage girls to go into STEM. Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook, started the Lean In project to connect girls and women passionate about STEM. Marissa Mayer, the former president and CEO of Yahoo, is an inspiring female executive from a STEM background. You may have to look closer for female role models,



but they are there.

If you're interested in STEM, join a club or enter a contest. The Google Science Fair, Intel Science Talent Search and Imagine Cup are 3 STEM-related contests. Your school might even have a science or math club that you could join. The National Girls Collaborative Project attempts to enhance STEM education for girls. So, consider STEM. We still need females in liberal arts, humanities and all those other fields, but it's high time that more girls feel encouraged to pursue science and technology.

It is unfortunate that we may dismiss going into STEM because we don't see role models around us, but a lot of organizations and people are working today to change that. And with more representation for women in STEM, maybe we as a society can finally close the gender gap.

# BURSTING THE BUBBLE





# How Should I View the Modern Queens?

by Joseph Ha  
OAKWOOD SECONDARY SCHOOL



November 8, 2016. I was sitting at my desk, anxiously glancing at my laptop screen. The end of the world was drawing nearer. More than a dozen votes behind Trump, Hillary Clinton was losing in the electoral college. A small spark of hope meekly flickered as I silently prayed for a miracle. Maybe, just maybe an avalanche of votes will flood in favor for Clinton. After thirty minutes of dreadful inactivity, a mere ten or so votes were added to Clinton's box. An hour later, the election concluded. No astounding avalanche came. My spark of hope was extinguished. The next day, I watched as Clinton tearfully addressed her supporters. Though I don't consider myself as an advocate, I was still nevertheless a little disappointed at the opportunity lost. Eight years ago, a man broke the glass ceiling for race when he was elected president. Had Clinton been granted the same circumstance, the glass ceiling for gender would have had a massive hole.

March 10, 2017. The headlines flash throughout the Internet. President Park Geun-hye, South Korea's first female president, is impeached due to charges of corruption and abuse of power. The timing could not be any more ironic. Obviously, South Korea and America are two different animals. And of course, the allegations against Clinton were paper thin with little to no legitimate evidence. Yet, funny enough, as people considered the idea of a nefarious woman politician,

especially a president, to be of no concern, here comes this impeached female president who proves them all wrong.

A man's view on women leaders, in my opinion, depends on his relationship to feminism. And it's important to remember that support for female empowerment is not only political, but also social and personal.

A man could preach the most sincere progressive plea for women to get equal pay or the right to an abortion but still fail at gender equality if he treats his female friends unfairly and different from his male friends. All these reasons are why I hesitate to call myself a feminist. As a teenager, I'm still trying to discover what my values are.

At the moment, I find myself agreeing with the concerns women raise about the patriarchal nature of contemporary culture and how it negatively impacts women. However, agreeing doesn't magically exempt me from hypocrisy. In fact, I'm not entirely sure if I'm just passively accepting these concerns while not thoroughly engaging with them. Such apathy could hide misogyny I won't be willing to admit to. If that's the case, then it would be better to be honest about my sexism so that I could change my ways if I ever get called out.

What relation does any of this have with my view on women leaders? Well, I have the

same hesitation whenever I consider supporting individuals, like Clinton. On the one hand, it is great to have more representation. Revolutionary ideas and excellent leadership can come from individuals who are not the typical male role models we are constantly taught about. I mean, if a woman is considered a human and a person, what is stopping us from putting her in power?

But while it may seem beneficial to see more women taking positions of authority, I also worry that we'll begin forgetting to judge people "by the content of their character," as wisely stated by Martin Luther King Jr. Maybe we didn't forget and I'm just being paranoid over an insignificant issue.

But from my experience, the feminist push for an increase in representation and empowerment has downplayed the fact that some women leaders aren't the moral individuals we want them to be. Now, I personally don't know if the allegations against Hillary Clinton are true. As I said before, they seem really weak to cause any legitimate concern.

But if for some crazy reason they are, in fact, true, we shouldn't ignore them and write them off as lies to keep women from becoming political leaders. Women are humans too and any human is subject to character flaws. This is a maxim we should remember about and apply to anyone, especially women.

# The Value of Never Settling

## Interview with Academic Dean Liz Willis

by Charlotte Kramon and Alyse Rovner  
OAKWOOD SECONDARY SCHOOL

One of the most challenging parts of being a feminist in 2019 is that people resistant to change easily denounce the need for feminism. They claim that women seem to have equal job opportunities and ask, What more can they possibly want? If a runner aspires to run three miles, they won't give up at two miles. After interviewing Liz Willis, Academic Dean of Oakwood Secondary School, we understand the persistence of gender barriers in education. Women can only reach a certain number of miles; in other words, attaining a high educational position can be seen as an outlandish goal for women, but not for men.

Liz originally envisioned a university professor's life until the birth of her twins, whom she expresses great affection for. After receiving her masters and Ph.D. in history and gender and sexuality studies, she taught at the university level but returned to independent school teaching, which accommodated the hours she needed with her kids. Nevertheless, Liz views her sub-disciplines as major assets to her leadership abilities at the school. "I powerfully believe that education is the practice of freedom, and these sub-disciplines are very rich with the potential to empower and enlighten," Liz says.

Luckily, Liz is surrounded by a support system of many men and women who have similar philosophies. That does not ease the hardships of gender barriers in education, though. Women often have positions of power, but only to a certain point. Most of Liz's female colleagues with leadership positions are department heads. Oakwood is not unique in that its highest positions—the principal, headmaster, and COO—are currently held by white men. Independent schools across the country are mostly the same, except for single-sex schools and elementary schools. The second is a key trend. Female heads of co-educational

schools usually lead K-8 institutions, almost as if people are most comfortable with the maternal role, Liz says. While those years are very important, an underlying sense persists in which "the most serious or esteemed roles" in secondary education exist in secondary schools, seemingly dominant to elementary schools.



Although she's experienced discrimination while trying to reach career goals, Liz is usually treated well by students. Liz feels that in both her role as an educator and dean she has been taken seriously, noting that in her classroom, she sets clear expectations that mandate respect. Liz feels that her insistence on what will fly and what won't is somewhat tied to her gender. Throughout the majority of Liz's educational background, she has had to maintain this "no-nonsense" mentality. This is where gender does, in fact, come in. This no-nonsense mentality may be tied to the phenomenon of "cool dads" and "mean

moms" which make it much easier for males to play a loose role, while "women feel that they have to maintain a certain degree of seriousness and focus or else they'll be undermined."

Liz told us about a time she felt disempowered at the beginning of her career as a visiting lecturer at LMU (2004), noting that as a professor, a student older than her came to class wearing a Harley Davidson T-shirt with the phrase, "If you can read this, the b\*tch fell off." Liz says didn't say anything because she was trying to come off as intellectual, dispassionate, and distant in order to prove that she belonged as a teacher at the university despite her youth. Today, she would have spoken up.

One of the reasons she's grown and would have called out the student today is due to the influence of one of her role models, Elizabeth English.

While working on an accreditation team last January, Liz became "impressed by [her] professionalism, no-nonsense, and firm but caring mentality." As the Head of Archer School, English became a person Liz looks up to as a female with the position she wants to attain but sees so few females occupying. English has been very encouraging of Liz's journey, who remembers wanting to grow up to be like her while working alongside her on the accreditation.

By the end of the interview, Liz had given us insight into many forms of difficulties women face not just in education, but in leadership roles in general. Her final words of advice to young women pursuing positions of power at academic institutions are: "persistence at all costs, get clear as to what you want, and be unapologetic in your ambitions. Never settle, never apologize for your ambitions. Don't second guess your own value. Don't be happy settling; you determine your own worth."