



Episode 1- Myth: Gender Equality Only Benefits Women

Overview:

Conversations around gender equality tend to focus on the significant barriers to resources and opportunities that women face. As a result of this focus, there is a pervasive myth that gender equality will only benefit women. Yet, contrary to this myth, gender equality benefits everyone. All people grapple with gender roles and stereotypes. We bust this myth with leading experts to show how faster child development, greater peace, and economic prosperity are related to gender equality!

Featured Guests:

Paulette Senior, *Canadian Women's Foundation*
Michael Flood, *Queensland University of Technology*
Jake Stika, *Next Gen Men*

Research Mentioned:

1. UNFPA (2005). Frequently asked questions about gender equality.
<https://www.unfpa.org/resources/frequently-asked-questions-about-gender-equality>
2. Rowe, M. L., Leech, K. A., & Cabrera, N. J. (2016). Going beyond input quantity: Wh-Questions matter for toddlers' language and cognitive development. *Cognitive Science* 41(1), 162-179.
3. Schwab, J. F., Rowe, M., Cabrera, N. J., Lew-Williams, C. (2018). Fathers' repetition of words is coupled with children's vocabularies. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology* 166, 437-450.
4. Dobbin, F. and Kalev, A. (2019). The promise and peril of sexual harassment programs. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 116(25), 12255-12260.

Additional Information:

Canadian Women's Foundation: www.canadianwomen.org
Next Gen Men: <https://www.nextgenmen.ca/>



Transcript

Episode 1—Myth: Gender equality only benefits women

Paulette Senior: If they want healthier relationships, if they want a more peaceful place and world to live in, I'd ask if they want more opportunity for their children, and ask them if they want our country, Canada's GDP, to actually increase. So if they say yes, then I would actually say to them that gender equality is a big if not major part of making all of that happen.

Alyson Colón: That was Paulette Senior, letting us know why gender equality will not only benefit women, but all of society. Welcome to Busted, a podcast by the Institute for Gender and the Economy. In this podcast, we bust prominent myths related to gender and the economy by teaming up with leading experts. We uncover the origins of each myth, find out what the research actually says, and give you the tools to bust each myth yourself. I'm Alyson Colón, and my pronouns are she and her.

Carmina Ravanera: And I'm Carmina Ravanera, and my pronouns are she and her.

Alyson: Carmina, this is our first episode. We are in the middle of a global pandemic and we are both recording from our respective homes. Obviously COVID-19 and its impacts are a major topic for everyone right now. We're discussing gender equality in this podcast, so would you say gender equality plays a role in this pandemic?

Carmina: It plays a huge role, whether we're talking about health or economic impacts. Evidence has shown that women and those from other equity-seeking groups are truly facing the brunt of the pandemic, such as contracting COVID-19, job loss, domestic violence, and lack of access to decent work. So in that sense, understanding and mitigating gender inequality is even more crucial.

Alyson: Right. So, I've heard people say in the past that if we are working towards gender equality, we are only supporting women and girls, and that gender inequality is just a women's issue. I think this brings us to the first myth we're busting: that gender equality only benefits women. Carmina, where does this myth come from?

Carmina: Unfortunately, this is a myth that has persisted for a long time. I think it's perpetuated by the mistaken belief that "gender" refers only to "women," instead of referring to people of all genders, including men. So many people think that programs or projects that focus on "gender" are just benefiting women and girls. But gender equality discourse and work has generally focused on women for two main reasons: one, because women, as well as gender-diverse people, are more disadvantaged and discriminated against in relation to men, and two, men are often viewed as the standard in society, so their role in gender inequality is overlooked.

Alyson: So men and men's roles are kind of seen as a default, making them almost invisible in gender inequality?

Carmina: Right. The United Nations Population Fund, which does a lot of work on gender equality initiatives in developing economies, wrote that: "The achievement of gender equality implies change for both men and women...It is therefore crucial not to overlook gender as an aspect of men's social identity. This fact is, indeed, often overlooked, because the tendency is to consider male characteristics and attributes as the norm, and those of women as a variation of the norm." To achieve gender equality, it



is really important to transform the systems that make people including men, adhere to gendered norms, roles, and attributes. We'll talk more about this in this episode.

Alyson: Right. At our institute we've done a lot of work around masculinity with researchers and students, and what we have heard is that a lot of men feel really deeply impacted by gender norms and expectations about male behaviour. It sounds like equity could have pay-offs for men, women, and people of all genders. To dig into this, who did you speak to?

Carmina: First, I spoke to Paulette Senior, the President and CEO of the Canadian Women's Foundation. The Canadian Women's Foundation is a public foundation for women and girls. They fund programs across Canada, bring communities together to share knowledge and solutions, and act as a national hub for grassroots leaders, issue experts, advocates, and donors who are raising awareness and keeping up the momentum towards gender equality.

Alyson: That's great. I'm so excited to hear Paulette's thoughts on this topic. Before we do that, I want to be clear on these terms. How are we defining gender equality?

Carmina: Gender equality refers to "the equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities" of peoples of all genders—meaning that an individual's rights, responsibilities or opportunities should not depend on the gender they identify with, or the sex they were born with. This includes men, women, non-binary people, transgender people, and everyone else. Anyone who is influenced by gender has a stake in gender equality. But we also have to remember that gender equality is different from equity. Here's what Paulette had to say about this in our interview.

Paulette: Gender equality is a general term that is really on a very basic level. It's about a world where gender doesn't stop you from having rights and opportunities and that it doesn't put you above others in an advantageous situation where you're having more access to rights and opportunities over others. So it's really about what we call a level playing field, where everyone, whatever their gender, has equal opportunities and rights in society. It's really also about equity. So in order to get to equality we need to do that and understand principles of equity. And that means being able to understand that there are those among us, because of issues – because of their identities such as race or gender identity, particularly in this case a good example would be trans women, women or people with disabilities, as well as Indigenous women and others – that they have greater barriers to actually being able to achieve equality. And therefore matters around equity must apply as we work towards gender equality.

Alyson: Great. Now let's move on to actually busting the myth. What did Paulette have to say about why gender equality benefits everyone?

Carmina: So Paulette outlined several concrete ways advancing gender equality benefits everyone. Let's hear what she had to say.

Paulette: One is that where there is more gender equality, there is greater peace. So we know that gender equality is a more reliable predictor of peace, and more so than a country's GDP or level of democracy. Gender equality is a better and more reliable predictor of that. We also know that advancing gender equality will add billions of dollars to our economy. I mean, while there is a strong moral imperative to ensure that we have a society that's based on equality, we also know that there is an economic argument that cannot be disputed. So for example, we know that decreasing workplace inequality could actually benefit our economy by as much as 150 billion by 2026. But also, based on the McKinsey Report, we know that if we were to entirely get rid of gender inequality, it would be as high as \$420 billion. So the argument is clear that when we reduce barriers to women's workforce participation, promoting women's leadership, we have a much more equal society and a better economy. Another would be gender diversity. So gender diversity in leadership roles boosts business performance. It's critical to know that companies with the highest levels of diversity, whether that be gender, ethnicity, race



etc., are anywhere from 15 to 35% more likely to have financial returns above their industry's national average. That's compelling enough itself and a good reason why it should be a common practice around businesses and corporations. Another would be sharing household work tasks that will lead to happier relationships. We know that women continue to spend more of their time on unpaid housework and childcare and just care in general than their male counterparts or male partners. Research shows that gender imbalances around housework can actually lead to breakdowns in relationships and frictions in relationships and therefore more likelihood for divorce. But the time that women spend on unpaid work is also a contributing factor to the gender wage gap. Lastly the fifth example would be that gender equality makes children's lives better. In fact, teens in countries with high levels of gender equality where social norms are likely to support both parents' involvement in childcare, they report higher levels of life satisfaction. So this is a critical aspect because we know that the issues around mental health in teen years is one of the issues that we watch closely as a society.

Carmina: So, on a societal and community level, there are so many benefits when we have more gender equal societies. I think this is especially relevant now, during COVID. Last summer we saw that women's participation in the Canadian labour force dropped to what it was in the 1980s. They are more likely to be taking care of kids or helping with homeschooling when compared to men, so many have stopped paid work. Daycare is not well funded here compared to many other OECD countries, so for many women there is no choice but to leave their jobs. That is a gender equality issue, but it's also a major economic problem – how can we have a strong economy if so many people are no longer in gainful work?

Alyson: Care work is so critical for people to be able to participate in the work force right now. This is a great list from Paulette. She mentions child development in this list, and I know that a lot of the work GATE has done on masculinity has looked at parenthood and men's experiences as fathers. Research in the field of psychology has shown us is that there are multiple benefits to a child's development when there is active father involvement. For example, there is some research that looked at heterosexual couples parenting infants that found that infants who have an engaged father develop language skills earlier, and this happens because fathers have different speech patterns than the mother, and the babies are exposed to different speech patterns from both parents – resulting in a faster development.

Carmina: Yes, that's a great example.

Alyson: Let's get a little deeper into this topic. It's easy to say that gender equality can benefit everyone, but I want to talk about men in particular. As you said earlier, they're often forgotten in conversations about gender. But since "men" are a gender, men must play a role in bringing about all of these things that Paulette just mentioned.

Carmina: You're right, men are often forgotten in these conversations, even though engaging with men in gender equality initiatives is crucial.

Alyson: Let's define another term: masculinity. What is it, and how does it affect men?

Carmina: First, I talked to Michael Flood. He's a sociologist and professor at the Queensland University of Technology in Australia. He researches violence against women, fathering, pro-feminism, and men's movements, among other related topics. So to answer your question in a simple way: masculinity is a set of socially constructed attributes, behaviours, and roles typically associated with men's gender. Michael defined it well when he spoke to me.

Michael Flood: I'd start by defining gender. Gender refers to the meanings we give to being male or female and the social organization of men's and women's lives. So what it means to be a man or woman in any particular society and how men's and women's lives are organized in society. And so when it comes to masculinity, masculinity refers to the meanings given to being male and the social organization of men's and boys' lives. So for example in many societies what it means to be a man is to be tough, to



be active, to be daring, to take risks, to not show emotion, and above all, to be not feminine – to avoid the qualities and behaviours stereotypically associated with girls and women.

Carmina: I also spoke about this topic with Jake Stika, Executive Director and Co-founder of the organization Next Gen Men. Next Gen Men works to disrupt toxic takes on gender roles, expectations and limitations through education, engagement and advocacy. It also promotes healthy masculinity and gender equity. When I asked Jake about his thoughts on masculinity, he talked about how gender is not necessarily a useful frame for either men or women.

Jake Stika: When we think about masculinity, often times it's a pretty constrictive man box that we're kind of pushed into existing within. You know, we know what it means when people tell us to man up, act like a man, boys will be boys--there's a lot of cultural coding in masculinity that men are expected to perform, and if they don't there's consequences to that: social isolation, exclusion, derogatory language, specifically homophobic and misogynist language. And so for us, you know, I think the question that I want to answer with is, is it beneficial to code anything as masculine or feminine? Because I think in that instance there's a hierarchy, right. So if caregiving and nurturing are feminine and leadership and being strong are masculine, in whatever context that is, that it will always be upheld that way and people will be measured against that.

Alyson: So what I'm hearing is that when we talk about gender, we talk about men and women, and non-binary people, we need to keep in mind that the ideas we have about gender are socially constructed, and they can be changed. As Jake says, they can be "undefined" - we can create new ideas of what it means to be a man or women – or throw out our ideas of gender all together!

Carmina: Exactly. We don't have to live by these gender norms, especially considering many of them create conditions of oppression.

Alyson: They've already touched on it a little bit already, but what did these experts have to say about how changing gender roles like masculinity, and living in more gender equal societies, will help men and boys lead better lives?

Carmina: Jake and Michael both pointed to the various ways in which men's and boys' lives are limited by masculine gender roles.

Michael: So we know that gender plays itself out in boys and men's lives, and one key thing that the research shows is that that is limiting to boys and men ourselves, that our own health in some ways is limited by those kinds of wider meanings and patterns to do with masculinity. So for example, you know, we know that in countries such as the USA, Australia, and other countries, men's health is in many ways poorer than women's health. And one risk factor for poor health is conforming to traditional masculinity. So to break that down a bit, if a man believes that to be a real man, you've got to take risks, you've gotta be tough, you've gotta avoid asking for help, then when he's struggling, when his physical health is poor or when his partner has left him and he's feeling lonely and depressed and so on, he is less likely to ask for help, less likely to reach out, less likely to seek help. He may have shallower friendships and social networks because again, you know, masculine socialization and so on. So one key insight about men's lives is that men's lives are shaped, and in some ways limited, by masculinity, by the meanings we give to being a man.

Jake: Oftentimes just the conversation can sometimes turn into how well men have it right now, and in many facets we definitely have a lot of power and privilege. But the reality is that we are also three out of four suicides; we die on average five years earlier than women due to lack of health-seeking behaviors and increased risk-taking behaviors; we're the primary perpetrators of violence against women, against children, against other men and against ourselves, so we're steeped in the culture of violence. We have higher rates of substance abuse and therefore addiction, incarceration, homelessness, you know. So if



we're not on the straight and narrow and things are humming along for us, the consequences are pretty dire, in terms of all those statistics that I just listed. But I also just like to think of it as, you know, the life cycle. We see three year old boys hugging and holding hands until someone tells them inevitably that boys don't do that. And they need affection and physical touch, and so the only way they get license to do that is through roughhousing and play fighting and then you know, "boys will be boys" manifests. And then when they are seven years old, they are told to stop crying and to act like a big boy and they're quickly taught that being emotional and sharing those emotions with the world is not good. And then when they are, you know, 13 to 14 years old, they are told to man up, that, you know, they gotta be hyper competitive, they gotta be at the top of their sport, their craft, their education. That you know, they have to aspire to be CEOs, and that the measure of a man is the losing of one's virginity. And so they start framing every interaction they have with someone of the opposite sex of as, can I get laid? And so all of those little nuggets over the course of this young man's life really socially condition him to get to a point and to see the world through a specific worldview. And it doesn't have to be that way.

Carmina: To sum it up, gender roles and norms that push people into certain behaviours can harm everyone, including men and boys. Gender ends up pigeonholing people into boxes that are restricting or dangerous. So, this is another important way in which gender equality, and changing these roles, can benefit all of us.

Alyson: So Michael mentioned how a key tenet of masculinity is not being like a woman, even going against femininity. Isn't it important to emphasize the hierarchy that gender creates between men and women? Even though men are harmed by gender roles, women are too, remaining less powerful and less privileged than men.

Carmina: Absolutely, and that's something that Michael acknowledged when I talked to him. Men are negatively affected by these gender roles, but they are also privileged by them.

Michael: If we look at the people who run governments, if we look at the people in corporate boardrooms, and so on, many of those people are men. They're not working class men, they're not gay men, they're not men of colour, typically. Typically they're white, heterosexual men from economically privileged backgrounds. So they're not any men. But there is a pattern of inequality, a pattern of inequality involving men having greater political and economic power than women. Likewise if we look at violence, for example. If we look at family and domestic violence, much of that violence is by men against women, against children. Most men aren't violent, most men would never dream of using violence. But when that violence happens often it's by men. And alongside that there's often violence against men by other men. So, we see some kind of complicated patterns of gender inequality. So part of gender is a pattern of inequality, in which some men, many men, receive unfair privileges and women receive disadvantages.

Carmina: Although gender equality will benefit men, men do have many unfair advantages over women and gender-diverse people – especially men who are white and wealthy, who hold the vast majority of power in society. That's something that gender equality initiatives and projects aim to change.

Alyson: So, even if we know how gender equality could benefit men, the potential to lose power and privilege must create some tension, doesn't it?

Carmina: Yes, it can create a lot of tension in fact.

Alyson: A lot of the discussions that we have at GATE look at this kind of backlash. For example, the backlash to the #MeToo movement. We are now hearing from male senior leaders that with the rise of #MeToo, they are hesitant to work with female colleagues. They are concerned about behaving incorrectly or saying something that could be considered harassment.



Carmina: Yeah, we've seen a lot of this, even though the likelihood of false harassment or assault reports is extremely low. And research also shows that anti-harassment training, which is intended to help address some of the issues raised by the #MeToo movement, can actually reduce men's likelihood of establishing working relationships with women and it can even reduce the numbers of women chosen for management roles. So now women may face some potentially reduced opportunities.

Alyson: Really, the goals of #MeToo are to create safer conditions for everyone, including men – many of whom also experience harassment and assault - but the potential to lose privilege seems to be threatening to many men.

Carmina: You're right, it is threatening for some people. But, I do feel like this resistance is expected when important societal changes are being made. Both Jake and Michael spoke to resistance and backlash that can come about from gender equality initiatives, specifically from men and boys. But, when I asked them about this, they also spoke to how it can be addressed. In particular, they talked about reframing this issue.

Michael: There is a fair amount of discomfort or resistance, or you know, sort of outright backlash to efforts to promote gender equality. And you see that, you know, in a presentation or a workshop on gender issues, where you know, there's a couple of guys at the back of the room with their arms crossed muttering about what a waste of time this is, or how, you know, how much this is male bashing, that kind of informal resistance or discomfort. You also see organized resistance or backlash when, for example, anti-feminist men's groups, men's rights groups, and fathers' rights groups, lobby or petition or hold protests and so on. We do need to respond well to those forms of resistance and backlash. And I think actually the first thing to do, ironically, is to listen to those concerns. You know, when there is pushback in a workplace or pushback in a sporting setting or a faith institution, to try to create a kind of safe, constructive space to hear those men out, what their concerns are about, what their fears are about. And the second step is not then necessarily to affirm those, to think, well of course you're right, and of course men are the victims and women were being unfairly promoted, because that's extremely unlikely. The second step is I think to kind of put those fears and context in a broader context, and to try to offer good straightforward information about what's actually going on about, you know, the kind of basis of those fears. And also to appeal to men sense of what's fair, what's just, and also appeal to men's sort of care and concern for the women and girls around them. Certainly, it's important to frame these issues well. In a report I wrote with a colleague, Graham Russell, for the Diversity Council of Australia we wrote a report called Men Make a Difference. And in that report, Men Make a Difference, we said that the first thing you need to do is get the framing right, get the framing of gender issues right. Not as a women's issue but as a gender issue. And we argued precisely for engaging men in safe and constructive conversations about what's going on. And very much to appeal to men, to appeal to men, men's care and concern for women, men's values and principles, and the benefits that men themselves will experience from more inclusive and fairer workplaces.

Jake: A lot of it comes down to: we overvalue what it is that we might gain, and we undervalue what it is we might lose. Because when we think about, you know, that dominance or power and privilege over women, it's actually not just over women within patriarchy. There's power and privilege that men wield over one another, right? When I was listing those statistics earlier, men are also the primary perpetrators of violence against other men. We know that through, you know, locker rooms and schoolyards, and you know, going to the bar and hoping that you don't step on the wrong guy's toes. There's a lot of violence in that, just across the board, and we feel like maybe we might lose some of that power we wield over others regardless of their sex or gender. But on the flip side of that, can we have better mental health outcomes for ourselves? Can we have richer relationships with our male peers? Can we have deeper relationships with our partners? Can we have stronger attachments with our children? Can we live in more respectful relationships with our colleagues and superiors in the workplace? You know there's a lot to gain from reframing it.



Carmina: Basically, while this resistance exists, we have no choice but to work within that tension, and to continue to advocate for a fairer world. As Jake says, there's so much for society to gain when we change our societies and make them more gender equal.

Alyson: Right. I think this comes back to the point that these topics are very complex, and it can be uncomfortable to see how we are implicated, and in some cases, how we benefit from inequality. We have to be willing to have uncomfortable conversations, and to be actively thinking about what privileges we receive from the status quo. And then finally I think we have to think about what our responsibility is to change things.

Carmina: Yeah, exactly.

Alyson: So, if someone was to say to me, "Hey, Alyson, I don't support gender equality initiatives because they will only benefit women – and I think men are losing out", what should I say to convince them otherwise?

Carmina: Well, let's return to the five points that Paulette made about the many ways gender equality can help advance our societies. She had some great talking points to respond with.

Paulette: When all women and girls do well, at home and globally, of all identities, of all backgrounds and all experiences, for all the equity-seeking groups, everyone does well. To wrap up I want to just quote one of our founding mothers. Rosemary Brown, the first African Canadian woman that was actually elected in provincial legislature in this country, said "until all of us have made it, none of us have made it". And I don't just say that for woman, I say that for all of us.

Carmina: And, to be more specific to men's perspectives, Michael similarly suggested responding by saying that yes, gender equality benefits women, and as a result, it helps everyone. Here's what he had to say.

Michael: The first thing I would say is that gender equality definitely benefits women. And because it benefits women, it benefits men. Men will benefit if our daughters, our sisters, our mothers, our female friends, our female partners and so on, live better lives, live fairer lives, where they are given the same opportunities that men are given. Better lives where they're less subject to harassment or objectification or discrimination and so on so. Gender equality benefits women and precisely because it benefits women, not unfairly but in a fair way, it makes life fairer, it also benefits men. But gender equality also benefits men because men's lives are shaped as much by gender as women's lives. Men too, boys and men too, are socialized into certain ways of behaving, certain ways of being, certain ways of relating to others because of gender. And if we can open up gender roles, if we can encourage gender multiculturalism or gender democracy, that is, if we can encourage more diverse, more inclusive, healthier models of gender for men and women alike, then men too will benefit. Men will benefit in terms of our personal health, our physical and mental health. Men will benefit in terms of our relationships, our friendships and relationships with women and girls, and indeed with other men and boys as well. And men will benefit in terms of the flow in benefits to our workplaces and communities. More inclusive workplaces are more profitable, more efficient, more effective, more enjoyable workplaces, and men spend time in those workplaces. And so gender equality is good for men at every level: at the personal level, at the interpersonal level, in terms of you know, relating to other people, and at the community and institutional level.

Alyson: I think this brings us full circle. Achieving equality can come with discomfort and tensions – but if we can make progress, the benefits really are for everyone. Michael paints a beautiful picture of that equitable future, and I hope we can get there!

Carmina: Me too!



Alyson: So, now that we've busted this myth, as individuals, what can we do to help advance gender equality?

Carmina: So there are a lot of things people can do. When I asked Michael about this in the context of men and gender equality in workplaces, this is what he told me.

Michael: There are a lot of things that men can do in our everyday lives, in workplaces and elsewhere, to support gender equality. And actually the best place to start is with ourselves. In many ways, for men to be allies, to kind of be agents of change, or champions of change as it's sometimes called, we actually need to start with ourselves. We need to put our own houses in order. We need to think about, how do I treat women at work? How do I treat the women who are junior to me or senior to me? Do I rely on you know, old sexist stereotypes in how I judge women's and men's work? Do I form friendships only with other men at work and not with women? How do I judge women's and men's experience and behavior and dress and so on? And I'm not saying that men have to be perfect. You know, that would be a mistake. We don't have to be perfect. All of us will make mistakes. I've definitely made mistakes and behaved in sexist ways in the past and so on. And in fact, we're constantly invited back into those by media, by friends and so on. So it's not that men have to be perfect, but we certainly have to start with ourselves and our own everyday behavior at work. But beyond that there are vital roles that men can play as allies, as allies to women. And that's true whether you're the head of a company, you know, a manager or a leader, or whether you're you know just an ordinary guy, on the shop floor or in the corridors and so on. We can for example be inclusive, make sure that we're inclusive of women and men in our everyday conversations, in our work practices. We can make sure that we speak up, we speak up when there are sexist stereotypes being offered, or when we know there's kind of harassment going on, or when people are talking about women, for example in ways that are objectifying, treating them as objects or that play down their achievements and skills and so on.

Carmina: As Michael said, one of the best things to do is to put your own house in order. Look at your interactions with people of different genders, and examine your own biases, beliefs, and behaviours. What role might you be playing in perpetuating gender inequality?

Alyson: That seems like a really good place to start.

Carmina: And when I spoke to Paulette about what individuals can do more generally, she spoke to the need to recognize and learn about the ways in which gender inequality exists in our relationships, our workplaces, our cities, and our countries. And this is important for everyone, not just men. Let's listen to what Paulette had to say.

Paulette: The work that we're doing in this area is critical. We are doing this work because we see time and again that issues around gender equality continue to be perpetuated in various ways. So the gender pay gap is one, but violence against women, against girls, against Indigenous woman is another. When we are actually able to tackle issues of gender inequality, whether it takes the shape of violence or poverty or low self-esteem or lack of leadership opportunities, when we're able to tackle those issues and actually address them head on, then we're actually able to see a better world, a better society, a better economy, a more peaceful world. Those are critical things and those of us who are steeped in this work, we know it because we can see it all. But I would really look forward to an opportunity where the general public who are not deep in this work can actually have the opportunity to learn about it, and in learning about it actually take action, whether that action is funding those of us who are doing this work, going out and joining a community organization, looking at what's happening in your own homes in terms of equal sharing of work and tasks...but also look at what's happening in your work environment and how can you actually improve that, to bring about a more equal work environment. I think we all can play a role.



Alyson: I think we can confidently say gender equality will benefit everyone. Of course, if you'd like to help advance gender equality in Canada, you can support the work of the Canadian Women's Foundation and Next Gen Men, as well as the work of GATE. You'll find ways to do so in the podcast show notes, as well as the research we discussed today.

Carmina: Finally, don't miss our next episode of Busted! We'll be busting the myth: Gender quotas thwart meritocracy. And, I'll give you a hint: They don't! Here's a clip from our next episode.

Rainbow Murray: If you believe that gender quotas are a threat to meritocracy, then by extension you believe that we currently have a meritocracy. And if you believe that we currently have a meritocracy, then you believe that having businesses and governments that are dominated by wealthy white men is a result purely of merit, and that therefore white people are more meritorious than people of colour, that men are more meritorious than women, and that people born into wealthy families are more meritorious than people born into poor families. And that is what you're saying if you say that gender quotas are a threat to meritocracy. A lot of people when it's put like that don't actually believe those things.

Alyson: This podcast is brought to you by the Institute for Gender and the Economy at the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management. To find additional podcasts, videos, research briefs, and more, visit GATE at www.gendereconomy.org. Until next time, happy mythbusting!