

Activity #4 -- Double Standards:

What's Good for the Goose Is Good for the Gander

Overview:

This activity is to bring awareness to young men and women about the double standard regarding displayed anger and assertiveness for men and women.

Objective:

Students will examine a real world example of a woman being penalized for situations that men have historically not been penalized for. Students will discuss how this type of situation plays out in the work world as well. Students will learn strategies for expressing assertiveness and emotions in the workplace.

Time Suggested: 30 minutes, depending on discussion.

Step 1:

Begin the session by handing out and reading the 2018 article about Serena Williams. Ask for general responses to the article. Highlight the first section on Ms. Williams showing emotion on the court. Was her anger justified? Is showing anger appropriate for men or women? If so, when? How?

Step 2:

Give out handout that has research references and strategies. Walk through the information and discuss the students' reactions. Discuss the strategies with the students.

Step 3:

If interested, show a YouTube video of John McEnroe's outbursts. There are many to choose from. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8Nyc9jzSDg>

blank

Serena Williams is calling out sexism in tennis. Here's why.

By [Nicole Chavez](#), CNN

Updated 2:19 PM ET, Mon September 10, 2018

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/09/09/us/serena-williams-sexism-tennis-controversy/index.html>

(CNN)[Serena Williams'](#) heated dispute with the umpire during the US Open final is the latest controversy involving the tennis superstar in recent months. Japan's Naomi Osaka beat Williams on Saturday in a Grand Slam showdown that ended in tears for both players -- for different reasons. What was supposed to be a fairy-tale matchup for Osaka and the player she idolizes spun out of control after Williams was handed code violations that she described as unfair.

The U.S. Open hit Williams with [fines totaling \\$17,000 for three violations](#), the U.S. Tennis Association said Sunday. The 23-time Grand Slam champion [has faced racist attacks for most of her career](#), and after the match Saturday, she said she believes sexism is rampant in the sport. Here's a look back at some recent times sexism has been called out on the tennis court:

Serena calls the umpire a 'thief'

Williams accused umpire Carlos Ramos of sexism after she was handed a series of code violations during Saturday's match. Ramos first gave Williams a code violation warning for coaching after he ruled that her coach, Patrick Mouratoglou, gave her hand signals from the stands. Then she got a point penalty for smashing her racket, followed by a game penalty for verbal abuse after she confronted the umpire.

"You stole a point from me and you are a thief," Williams told Ramos prompting the game penalty ruling.



At a news conference following her loss, Williams said she's seen male players call other umpires "several things."

"I'm here fighting for women's rights and for women's equality and for all kinds of stuff. For me to say 'thief' and for him to take a game, it made me feel like it was a sexist remark," she said. "He's never taken a game from a man because they said 'thief.' For me it blows my mind. But I'm going to continue to fight for women," Williams said.

The International Tennis Federation released this statement Monday:

"Carlos Ramos is one of the most experienced and respected umpires in tennis. Mr. Ramos' decisions were in accordance with the relevant rules and were re-affirmed by the US Open's decision to fine Serena Williams for the three offenses." "It is understandable that this high profile and regrettable incident should provoke debate. At the same time, it is important to remember that Mr. Ramos undertook his duties as an official according to the relevant rule book and acted at all times with professionalism and integrity."

Billie Jean King, a tennis legend and equal rights advocate, agreed with Williams.

"When a woman is emotional, she's "hysterical" and she's penalized for it. When a man does the same, he's "outspoken" & and there are no repercussions. Thank you, Serena Williams, for calling out this double standard. More voices are needed to do the same," King tweeted.

For Christine Brennan, a CNN sports analyst, the clashes between Williams and the umpire show that women are not being treated equally in the tennis world. "We know that there's quite a history to it. Think of John McEnroe, think of Ilie Nastase, Jimmy Connors, Andre Agassi. These men all berated chair umpires, famously so. Commercials have been made. McEnroe has done, 'you can't be serious' and all the other tirades, top of his lungs over the years and none of them received a game penalty," Brennan said.

"Would he (umpire) have done that with a man? History has said, no. He would not have done that with a man."

Retired US tennis star Andy Roddick tweeted, "I've regrettably said worse and I've never gotten a game penalty."

Alize Cornet is penalized for fixing her top

Williams isn't the only tennis player to find herself at the center of a gender-focused controversy. French tennis player [Alize Cornet](#) received a code violation a few weeks ago for briefly taking off her shirt on the court. During a 10-minute break from the blistering heat at Flushing Meadows, Cornet rushed off-court to change her shirt. When she returned, she realized that she was wearing it the wrong way and fixed her top.

In a statement, the US Open said it regretted the way Cornet was treated. The organization added that all players are allowed to change their shirts while sitting in their chairs while female players have the option to change shirts in "a more private location close to the court, when available."

However, male players have changed shirts many times on court without a problem. On Tuesday, John Isner changed his shirt 11 times throughout his three-plus hour match against Juan Martin del Potro. A day later, Wimbledon champion Novak Djokovic sat shirtless for several minutes while his opponent, John Millman of Australia, stepped away to change his shirt during a quarterfinals match. Neither of them was penalized.



Novak Djokovic stayed in court while John Millman of Australia left the pitch to change his shirt due to the humidity during a US Open Men's singles quarter-finals match on Wednesday. And Rafael Nadal regularly takes off his shirt after winning a match.

Officials introduce dress code after Serena's catsuit

In Williams' first major tennis match after giving birth, her outfit stole the show. In May, Williams wore a black catsuit at the French Open that helped her blood circulation after a difficult childbirth last September. Her Nike outfit, which she said was inspired by the movie "Black Panther," was praised by her fans but had tennis officials shaking their heads.

Serena Williams wore a black catsuit in Paris the French Open in May. French Tennis Federation President Bernard Giudicelli announced late last month that he will be introducing a new dress code that would ban players from wearing such form-fitting clothes at the tennis tournament.

"One must respect the game and the place," Giudicelli said.

Unlike Wimbledon, which has an all-white dress code, the French tournament never had a dress code before.

Williams, who has dealt with body shaming and even criticism over her dark features, took the high road and said she was not upset.

"We already talked. We have a great relationship," Williams said of Giudicelli last month, laughing as she added, "Everything is fine, guys."

After the controversy, she left the suit at home and wore a stylish black-and-brown one-shoulder silhouette dress with a tulle skirt at her first US Open match this year. The [\\$500 dress](#) was designed by Louis Vuitton menswear artistic director Virgil Abloh in partnership with Nike.

While Serena took the dress code change in stride, many of her fans -- including some famous ones -- called the move sexist. Actress Elizabeth Banks wrote on Twitter: "The amount of control men feel the need to exert over women is petty-level with this one. Serena Williams is the GOAT [Greatest of All Time]. The game respects HER." Television show creator Shonda Rhimes wrote: "The game seems quite content to be played no matter what women wear. Perhaps this man should focus on his own fashion choices and respect the GOAT's right to wear whatever the hell she pleases. #getoffhercourt"

Anger in the Workplace

Public expressions of emotion are governed by strongly gendered social rules. Violating those rules can evoke negative reactions from others. Past research has demonstrated that expressions of anger demonstrate competence and high status.

Male job applicants who expressed anger were shown to be more likely to be hired than those who expressed sadness, and they were subsequently given more power and autonomy in their jobs. However, women's expressions of anger – because they run counter to social expectations – can decrease rather than increase women's status and perceived competence.

Displays of anger from men are often viewed as a response to external circumstances, (i.e. they were provoked), while displays of anger by women are more likely to be seen as an internal trait (i.e. she is an angry person).

These three studies examine the relationship between gender, displays of emotion, internal and external interpretations for emotional reactions, and status in the professional context. ... This study demonstrated that women are subject to negative backlash for expressing anger in professional settings even while men are accorded higher status for the same emotional displays. Moreover, the loss in status and perceived competence in women is a result of others attributing their anger to personal characteristics, rather than legitimate external situations. When an external cause is provided, the effect is mitigated¹.

Brescoll, V., & Uhlmann, E. (2008). Can an angry woman get ahead? status conferral, gender, and expression of emotion in the workplace.

Assertiveness in the Workplace

A Yale study found that male executives who spoke more than their peers were viewed as more competent. For the female executives, it was the reverse. If they spoke more than their peers, they were judged **14 percent less** competent.²

¹ Brescoll, V., & Uhlmann, E. (2008). *Can an angry woman get ahead? status conferral, gender, and expression of emotion in the workplace. Psychological Science, 19, 268-275*

² Brescoll, Victoria L., "Who Takes the Floor and Why: Gender, Power, and Volubility in Organizations" February 29, 2012. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0001839212439994>

Strategies for Strong Emotions in the Workplace

- 1) Point out when two wrongs don't make a right. (Extreme anger isn't productive for men or women.)
 - 2) Don't use written communication to express anger or sarcasm (e.g. email, texts).
 - 3) Use exclamation points and bold/all cap lettering judiciously in written text.
 - 4) Lean toward curiosity before anger: Ask why a person is acting in a certain way, or why a situation is the way it is. Try to understand the situation better before you advocate for change.
 - 5) Take a breather before confronting the situation. Oxygen helps everyone.
 - 6) Communicate anger in a controlled manner: tell someone you are mad but don't be abusive.
 - 7) Structure your argument.
 - 8) Explain external forces that cause anger.
 - 9) Don't use tears as a substitute for anger.
 - 10) Call out double standards and make people aware of implicit biases.
-

Strategies for Being Assertive

- 1) Action without words -- Use non-verbal body language and leadership cues:
 - a) Stand tall and expansive
 - b) Make eye contact
 - c) Speak loudly
 - d) Lean in just a little to show engagement
 - e) Shake hands confidently
 - f) Use grounded gestures (hands at waist level, gestures in that horizontal plane)
 - g) Smile when appropriate
- 2) Use face to face communication. If you can't use face to face, use the phone.