

# A CALL TO MEN

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National Association of Men and Women Committed to Ending Violence Against Women

## HOW TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

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By Ted Bunch

My most memorable experience of what a full sense of privilege probably feels like was when I first received my E-Z Pass for my car. E-Z Pass is a device that allows tolls to be automatically deducted from the driver's account so that cash is not needed and therefore you get processed through tolls much faster when traveling. As I approached the toll, the tollgate began to rise and I drove through with no delay. I looked back at the long line of cars in the cash lane. I remember thinking as I watched the gate rise for me to pass that this must be what it is like to be a white man in America. I had access and privileges that made me feel welcome and preferred.

My male privilege as a black man is different; it does not go everywhere I go. For instance, if the police stop me while I am driving my car, I instinctively know to keep my hands on the steering wheel at the 10:00 and 2:00 position. I don't believe that the average white male experiences the police in the same way. This is because his male privilege is directly connected to and cannot be separated from his race privilege. However, even men of color, while being marginalized by racism, continue to experience the privileges and entitlements associated with being male. The benefit of this privilege operates in virtually every household, from the oldest male member to the youngest male child. Our privilege consists of rights, power and advantages given to men by men. Men control these rights and monitor them often at the expense of women.

***Naming The Problem:*** Domestic violence, rape, sexual assault and all forms of violence against women are the manifestation of sexism. The violence and abuse by men toward women is rooted in our history, our laws and woven into the fabric of our society. It must be contextualized within the construct of sexism, because male privilege, patriarchy and misogyny support this violence. The privileges, entitlements and advantage that we as men receive from the existing social and political construct provide us with support to act in overtly and covertly demeaning, oppressive, controlling and abusive ways toward women. Our culture and norms are founded on the belief that women have less value than men, and that the role of women is for the benefit, use, entertainment and pleasure of men.

For many years, concerned citizens, activists, advocates and many other dedicated people have made great efforts to end men's violence against women. The anti-rape and sexual assault community as well as the domestic violence community have been a tremendous change agent and have made remarkable progress in the effort to create safety, justice and fairness for women. Unfortunately, despite years of great effort, sacrifice and loss of life, the terror that women experience has not decreased. Men continue to get away with their violence, abuse, intimidation as well as the misuse of power for the purpose of controlling and dominating women. This is no