

# 10 things we learned about gender issues in the U.S. in 2017

[Pew Research Center](#)

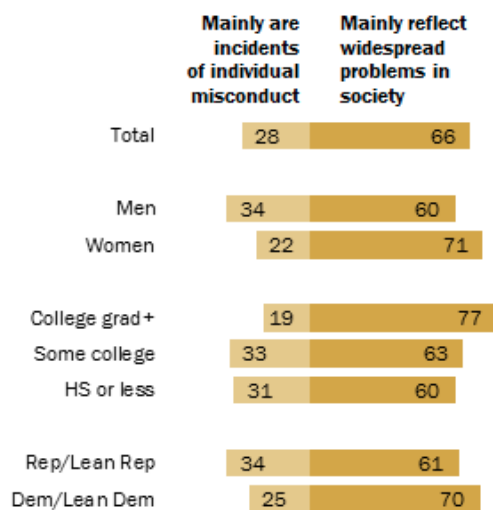
Allegations about sexual misconduct by **prominent men** in politics, entertainment, media and other industries have reverberated across the United States in recent months, drawing attention to issues of gender equality in the workplace and in broader American society. As 2017 comes to a close, here are 10 key findings about gender issues that are in the news today, drawn from Pew Research Center surveys conducted over the course of the year.

**1 Women and men in both political parties believe recent sexual harassment allegations primarily reflect **widespread societal problems**.** Two-thirds of Americans overall (66%) attribute the allegations mainly to widespread problems in society, while just 28% of adults attribute them mainly to incidents of individual misconduct, according to a survey conducted in November and December. While majorities of men and women and Democrats and Republicans see the allegations as reflective of societal problems, women are more likely than men to hold this view (71% vs. 60%). Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents are also somewhat more likely to say this than Republicans and Republican leaners (70% vs. 61%).

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## Most Americans say reports of sexual misconduct reflect societal problems

*% who say recent allegations of sexual harassment and assault ...*



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 29-Dec. 4, 2017.

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**2 About one-in-five employed women in the U.S. (22%) say they have been **sexually harassed at work**.** In a survey conducted in July and August – before the spate of recent misconduct allegations and the rapid spread of the #metoo social media campaign – 22% of employed women said they have experienced sexual harassment on the job, compared with 7%

of employed men. Some more recent surveys by other organizations (using somewhat different question wording) have placed the figure higher: In an **NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist poll** conducted Nov. 13 to 15, for example, 35% of women said they have personally experienced sexual harassment or abuse from someone in the workplace.

**3 About four-in-ten employed women (42%) say they have experienced some form of gender discrimination at work**, according to the July and August Pew Research Center survey. The survey asked Americans whether they had faced any of eight different kinds of gender discrimination in the workplace, including being treated as if they were not competent; experiencing repeated, small slights at work; and receiving less support from senior leaders than someone of the opposite sex who was doing the same job. Among employed men, 22% say they have experienced some form of gender discrimination at work. One especially stark gender gap involves income: Employed women are five times more likely than employed men (25% vs. 5%) to say they have earned less for doing the same job as someone of the other gender.

#### **Roughly four-in-ten working women say they've experienced gender discrimination at work**

*% of employed adults saying they have experienced each of these things at work because of their gender*



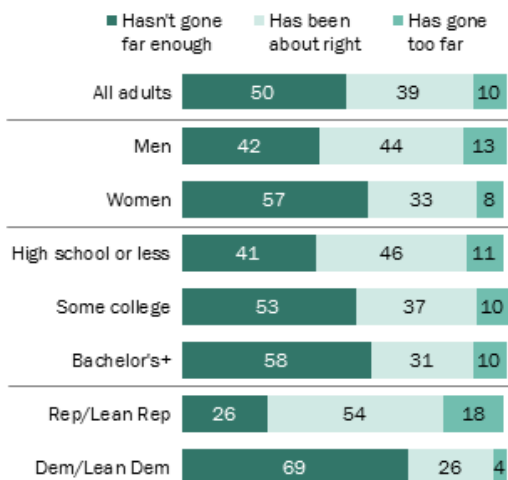
Source: Survey conducted July 11-Aug. 10, 2017.

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**4 A majority of women say the country hasn't gone far enough when it comes to giving women equal rights with men.** About six-in-ten women (57%) **hold this view**, compared with 42% of men. But there are sharp differences by political affiliation and – among Democrats – education. About three-quarters (74%) of women who are Democrats or Democratic-leaning independents say the country hasn't gone far enough on gender equality, compared with just a third (33%) of women who are Republican or Republican leaners. Among Democrats, women with a college degree are more likely than less-educated women to say the country hasn't gone far enough on gender equality.

## About six-in-ten women say the country hasn't gone far enough when it comes to gender equality

% saying the country \_\_\_\_ when it comes to giving women equal rights with men



Note: Share of respondents who didn't offer an answer not shown.  
 "Some college" includes those with an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree.  
 Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 8-21 and Sept. 14-28, 2017.  
 "Wide Partisan Gaps in U.S. Over How Far the Country Has Come on Gender Equality"

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**5 Majorities of both women (54%) and men (58%) say there is no difference in terms of which gender has it easier in the country these days.** Still, 41% of women say men have it easier than women, a view shared by 28% of men. Relatively small shares of women (5%) and men (14%) say women have it easier than men. Again, there are some substantial educational and political differences on this question. Among women, Millennials are significantly more likely than those in older generations to say men have it easier these days.

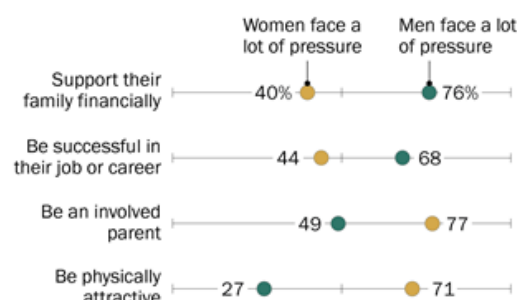
**6 Roughly three-quarters of U.S. adults (73%) see gender discrimination in the tech industry as at least a minor problem.** Women and men have different views of the size of the problem, though. Among women, 44% say such discrimination is a major problem, a view shared by 29% of men. While the tech industry has drawn attention when it comes to the way women in that field are treated at work, Americans tend not to see gender discrimination as more widespread in the tech industry than in others. More than half (57%) say there is about the same amount of discrimination against women in tech as there is against women in other industries.

**7 Most Americans say women face a lot of pressure to be an involved parent and be physically attractive.** The public sees vastly different pressure points for men and women as they navigate roles in society. Large majorities say women face a lot of pressure to be an involved parent (77%) and be physically attractive (71%). Far fewer say men face these types of

pressures, though majorities of Americans say men face a lot of pressure to support their family financially (76%) and be successful in their job or career (68%).

### Americans see different pressure points for men and women

% saying men/women face a lot of pressure to do each of the following



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 8-21 and Sept. 14-28, 2017.

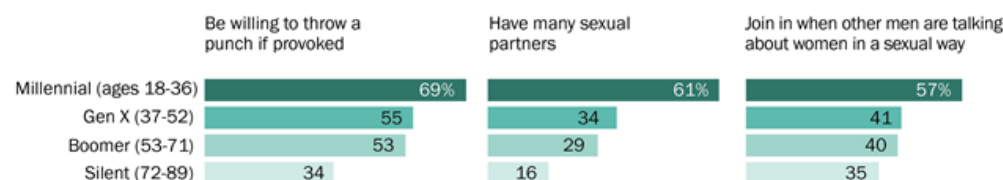
"On Gender Differences, No Consensus on Nature vs. Nurture"

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**8 A substantial share of men in the U.S. (45%) say men face a lot or some pressure to join in when other men talk about women in a sexual way.** Four-in-ten men perceive similar societal pressure on men to have many sexual partners. In both cases, Millennial men are more likely than older men to say such pressures exist. About six-in-ten Millennial men (61%), for example, say there is societal pressure on men to have many sexual partners, a view shared by only about a third or fewer men in older generations.

### Millennial men are more likely than older men to say their gender faces pressure in some key areas

% of men saying men face a lot or some pressure to do each of the following in our country these days



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 8-21 and Sept. 14-28, 2017.

"On Gender Differences, No Consensus on Nature vs. Nurture"

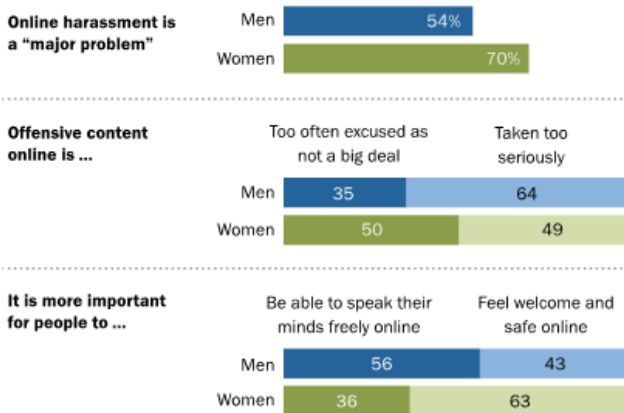
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**9 Seven-in-ten women see online harassment as a major problem.** A January **Pew Research Center** survey asked Americans about online harassment, which was defined using six categories of behavior: offensive name-calling, purposeful embarrassment, physical threats, stalking, sexual harassment, or harassment over a sustained period of time. Women were **more likely than men** to view online harassment as a major problem (70% vs. 54%). Women were also more likely than men to say offensive content online is too often dismissed as not a big

deal (50% vs. 35%) and to say people should be able to feel welcome and safe in online spaces (63% vs. 43%).

### Attitudes toward online harassment vary by gender

% of U.S. adults who say...



Source: Survey conducted Jan. 9-23, 2017.  
"Online Harassment 2017"

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### 10 About one-in-five U.S. women under 30 say they have been sexually harassed online.

Women ages 18 to 29 are more than twice as likely as men in the same age group to report being sexually harassed online (21% vs. 9%). Among the youngest adults – those ages 18 to 24 – women are more than three times as likely as men to say they've been sexually harassed online (20% vs. 6%). Women under 30 also are more likely than men in the same age group to say they've received explicit images they didn't ask for (53% vs. 37%).