



## DISCUSSION & REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- At the beginning of the video, Professor Sommers states that, “Women in the United States and in Western Europe are the freest and most liberated in human history. In many ways they are not merely doing as well as men, they are doing better, “ yet feminist activists perennially claim that, “...women are so oppressed, they don’t even know it.” Why do you think this is the case? What issues are at the crux of the modern feminist movement? Since women have achieved equality in so many areas, why do you think a feminist movement even exists anymore? Do you think that there needs to be a feminist movement anymore? Why or why not?
- Professor Sommers points out a major flaw in the founding principle of the modern feminist movement by asking, “...isn’t it more than a little patronizing to suggest that most American women are not free? [that] They’re not selfdetermining human beings?” How would you answer her question? Why?
- Professor Sommers explains that, “...I routinely encounter students who have fully accepted the feminist propaganda. American college women are arguably the most fortunate, liberated beings on the planet – yet in their feminist theory classes they are likely to learn that they are put upon and tyrannized by men.” Why do you think this is the case? Why do some people believe the propaganda, when the evidence doesn’t support it? What fundamental conditions precipitate young people being ‘duped’ into embracing the victim mentality, even people who have not experienced such victimization first hand?
- Professor Sommers issues a call to action by stating, “The time has come for young woman to take back feminism. Reform it. Correct its excesses. Repudiate the victim propaganda. Get rid of the “women are from Venus, men are from hell” storylines. Begin the arduous task of correcting almost three decades of feminist misinformation.” What are some specific actions women (and men) can take to ‘right the ship’ of the modern feminist movement? How much do you think adjusting attitudes and opening minds will play a part in the success of a women’s movement reformation? How exactly can that be done?
- Towards the end of the video, Professor Sommers informs us that, “Women who are plagued by workplace injustice or sexual violence will be best helped by truth and solid research – not by hysteria and hype.” What exactly does she mean by this? What type of truth would help? Solid research on what? Who should the truth and solid research be presented to? Do you think a video like this that actually presents truth and solid research should be shown in the same places where hysteria and hype are propagated (such as college feminist classes)? Why or why not? Would presenting truth and solid research have any meaningful impact on women? Why or why not? Do you think women in general would be willing to listen? Why or why not?

## EXTEND THE LEARNING:

### CASE STUDY: AAUW Wage-Gap Study

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the article “Wage Gap Myth Exposed – By Feminists,” then answer the questions that follow.

- How is the AAUW study misleading? Which important factors did it not take into account? What were some other significant flaws in the research?
- Do you think the fact that feminists have to resort to egregiously erroneous studies to attempt to substantiate their claims refutes the need for the movement in the first place? Why or why not? Do you think that the feminist movement has succeeded? Why or why not?
- In both the video and the article, Professor Sommers asks, “If it were really true that an employer could get away with paying Jill less than Jack for the exact same work, wouldn’t most employers fire as many of their male employees as possible, and replace them with females, and enjoy a huge market advantage?” How would you answer her question? Why?



# QUIZ

## THE MYTH OF THE GENDER WAGE GAP

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- 1. According to women's advocacy groups, women who decide to stay home with children, or to work fewer hours, or to become pediatricians rather than heart surgeons, are:**
  - a. Following their heart's desires.
  - b. Perfect examples of free and liberated women.
  - c. Held back by "invisible barriers" or internalized oppression.
  - d. Unhappy and depressed individuals.
  
- 2. The male-female wage gap does not account for which of the following:**
  - a. Occupations.
  - b. Hours worked per week.
  - c. Education.
  - d. All of the above.
  
- 3. American college women are likely to learn in their Feminist Theory courses\_\_\_\_\_.**
  - a. That much progress has been made for women's rights.
  - b. That they are put upon and tyrannized by men.
  - c. That women are not merely doing as well as men, they are doing better.
  - d. That the only way to gain true equality is to become President.
  
- 4. Women in the United States and in Western Europe still struggle with inequality and oppression.**
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
- 5. What is Christina Sommers' personal advice for young women?**
  - a. Join a women's advocacy group and help fight the continued tyranny of men.
  - b. Go to college and major in Women's Studies.
  - c. Appreciate, and make good use of, the unprecedented freedom that you have.
  - d. Steer clear of lower paying specialties in the medical field.



# QUIZ - ANSWER KEY

## THE MYTH OF THE GENDER WAGE GAP

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[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/christina-hoff-sommers/wage-gap\\_b\\_2073804.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/christina-hoff-sommers/wage-gap_b_2073804.html)

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# Wage Gap Myth Exposed -- By Feminists

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If you believe women suffer systemic wage discrimination, read the new American Association of University Women (AAUW) study [Graduating to a Pay Gap](http://www.aauw.org/resource/graduating-to-a-pay-gap/). [Edit: full study can be downloaded here: <http://www.aauw.org/resource/graduating-to-a-pay-gap/>] Bypass the verbal sleights of hand and take a hard look at the numbers. Women are close to achieving the goal of equal pay for equal work. They may be there already.

How many times have you heard that, for the same work, women receive 77 cents for every dollar a man earns? This alleged unfairness is the basis for the annual Equal Pay Day observed each year about mid-April to symbolize how far into the current year women have to work to catch up with men's earnings from the previous year. If the AAUW is right, Equal Pay Day will now have to be moved to early January.

The AAUW has now joined ranks with serious economists who find that when you control for relevant differences between men and women (occupations, college majors, length of time in workplace) the wage gap narrows to the point of vanishing. The 23-cent gap is simply the average difference between the earnings of men and women employed "full time." What is important is the "adjusted" wage gap-the figure that controls for all the relevant variables. That is what the new AAUW study explores.

The AAUW researchers looked at male and female college graduates one year after graduation. After controlling for several relevant factors (though some were left out, as we shall see), they found that the wage gap narrowed to only 6.6 cents. How much of that is attributable to discrimination? As AAUW spokesperson Lisa Maatz candidly said in an [NPR](#) interview, "We are still trying to figure that out."

One of the best [studies](#) on the wage gap was released in 2009 by the U.S. Department of Labor. It examined more than 50 peer-reviewed papers and concluded that the 23-cent wage gap "may be almost entirely the result of individual choices being made by both male and female workers." In the past, women's groups have ignored or explained away such findings.

"In fact," [says](#) the National Women's Law Center, "authoritative studies show that even when all relevant career and family attributes are taken into account, there is still a significant, unexplained gap in men's and women's earnings." Not quite. What the 2009 Labor Department study showed was that when the proper controls are in place, the unexplained (adjusted) wage gap is somewhere between 4.8 and 7 cents. The new AAUW study is consistent with these findings. But isn't the unexplained gap, albeit far less than the endlessly publicized 23 cents, still a serious injustice? Shouldn't we look for ways to compel employers to pay women the extra 5-7 cents? Not before we figure out the cause. The AAUW notes that part of the new 6.6-cent wage-gap may be owed to women's supposedly inferior negotiating skills -- not unscrupulous employers. Furthermore, the AAUW's 6.6 cents includes some large legitimate wage differences masked by over-broad occupational categories. For example, its researchers count "social science" as one college major and report that, among such majors, women earned only 83 percent of what men earned. That may sound unfair... until you consider that "social science" includes both economics and sociology majors.

Economics majors (66 percent male) have a median income of \$70,000; for sociology majors (68 percent female) it is \$40,000. Economist Diana Furchtgott-Roth of the Manhattan Institute has [pointed](#) to similar incongruities. The AAUW study classifies jobs as diverse as librarian, lawyer, professional athlete, and "media occupations" under a single rubric--"other white collar." Says Furchtgott-Roth: "So, the AAUW report compares the pay of male lawyers with that of female librarians; of male athletes with that of female communications assistants. That's not a comparison between people who do the same work." With more realistic categories and definitions, the remaining 6.6 gap would certainly narrow to just a few cents at most.

Could the gender wage gap turn out to be zero? Probably not. The AAUW correctly notes that there is still evidence of residual bias against women in the workplace. However, with the gap approaching a few cents, there is not a lot of room for discrimination. And as economists frequently remind us, if it were really true that an employer could get away with paying Jill less than Jack for the same work, clever entrepreneurs would fire all their male employees, replace them with females, and enjoy a huge market advantage.

Women's groups will counter that even if most of the wage gap can be explained by women's choices, those choices are not truly free. Women who major in sociology rather than economics, or who choose family-friendly jobs over those that pay better but offer less flexibility, may be compelled by cultural stereotypes. According to the [National Organization for Women](#) (NOW), powerful sexist stereotypes "steer" women and men "toward different education, training, and career paths" and family roles. But are American women really as much in thrall to stereotypes as their feminist protectors claim? Aren't women capable of understanding their real preferences and making decisions for themselves? NOW needs to show, not dogmatically assert, that women's choices are not free. And it needs to explain why, by contrast, the life choices it promotes are the authentic ones -- what women truly want, and what will make them happier and more fulfilled.

It will not be not easy for the AAUW and its allies to abandon the idea of systemic gender injustice. AAUW officials are trying mightily to sustain the bad-news-for-women narrative. According to "Graduating to a Pay Gap" publicity materials, "The AAUW today released a new study showing that just one year out of college, millennial women are paid 82 cents for every dollar paid to their male peers. Women are paid less than men even when they do the same work and major in the same field." Many [journalists](#) seem to have read and reported on the AAUW's press releases rather than its research.

That is the hype. Look at the numbers.

*Christina Hoff Sommers is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. She is the author of Who Stole Feminism and the War Against Boys. Her new book, Freedom Feminism -- Its Surprising History and Why It Matters, will be published in 2013 by AEI press.*