

Women in Surgery

Kristan Staudenmayer, MD, MS

Gordon and Betty Moore Endowed
Faculty Scholar
Associate Director Surgical ICU
Associate Professor of Surgery
Department of Surgery
Stanford, CA



Stanford
MEDICINE | School of Medicine

Condoleezza Rice

”Don't Let Somebody Else's Racism or Sexism Be Your Problem”

Growing up in segregated Birmingham, she was taught by her parents that because she was black and a woman that she had to be “twice as good.”



“The Beardless Lad”

Dr. James Barry (1795-1865)

- Trained Edinburgh Medical School
- Graduated in 1812 at the age of 17
- He joined the army as a surgeon during the Napoleonic wars
- In 1820 performed one of the first successful cesarean sections

At the time of his death, Dr. Barry was discovered to be a woman with abdominal findings suggestive of a previous pregnancy. Dr. Barry was actually Dr. Miranda Stewart, one of the first successful women surgeons



School of Medicine
University of Missouri

Department of General Surgery



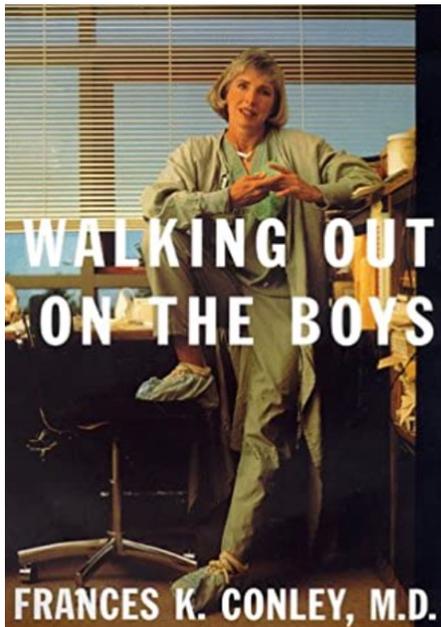


What was said
to me directly
by colleagues
(yes, to my
face)

Friendly Fire

- “Women can’t run trauma resuscitations as well as men”
- “Women should not be hired because they leave when they have kids”
- “Women can’t work with other women” (said to me by another woman)
- “Women should not be in the workplace with men because they will sleep with married men and get them in trouble”
- After learning 5 female surgeons were going out for drinks...”that is a scary henhouse to imagine”

Stanford literally has a book written about it describing how it is not a good place for women



1991

The Stanford Daily

'Destroyed my career': Faculty report unchecked sexual harassment in School of Medicine

“Kunz said she had not experienced gender discrimination until she assumed leadership roles, and gained some degree of success — and became perceived as a threat by some male colleagues.

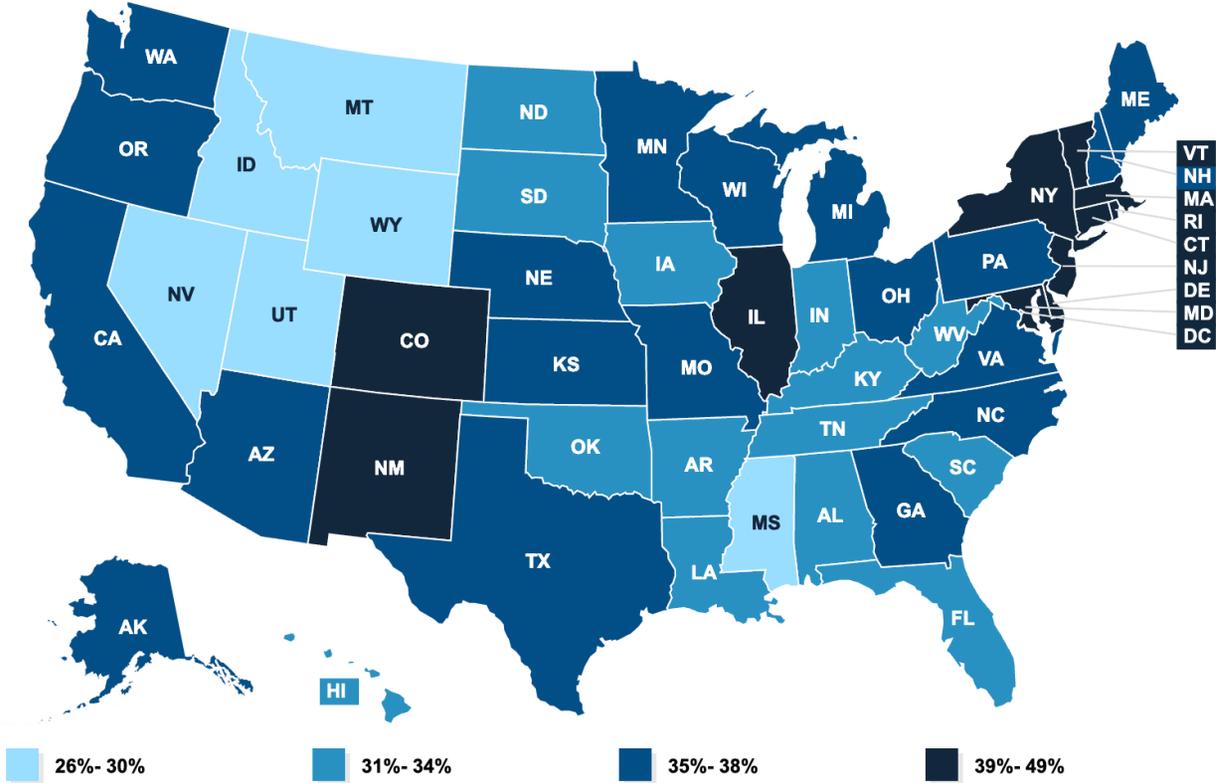
At that point, she said, she began experiencing subtle retaliation and microaggressions from male faculty, ranging from public put-downs to exclusion from research collaborations.”

2020

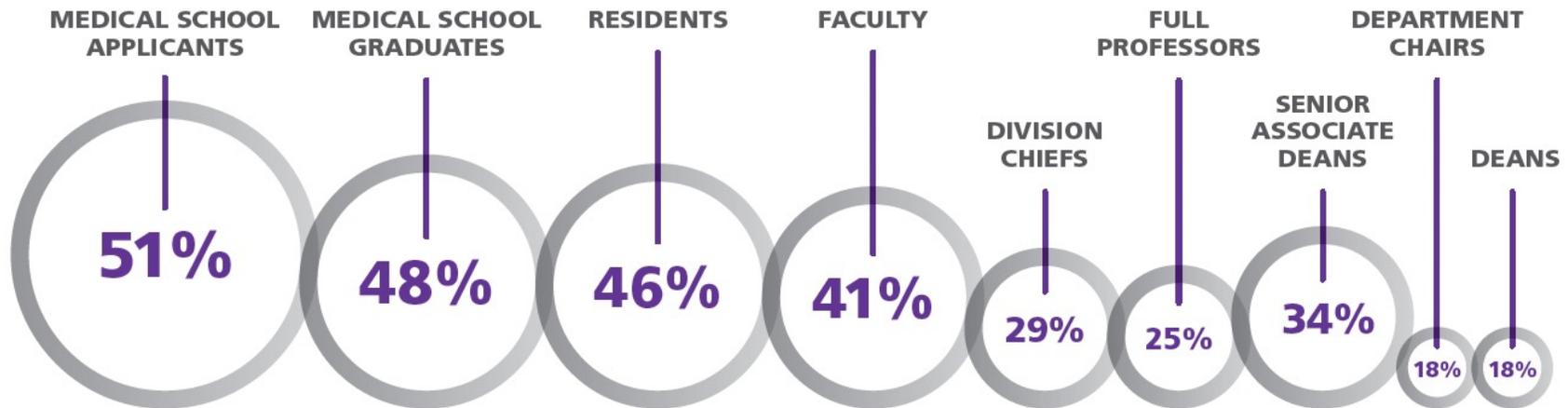
Let's talk facts

Women Physicians

Overall for the US, 37% of all active physicians are female

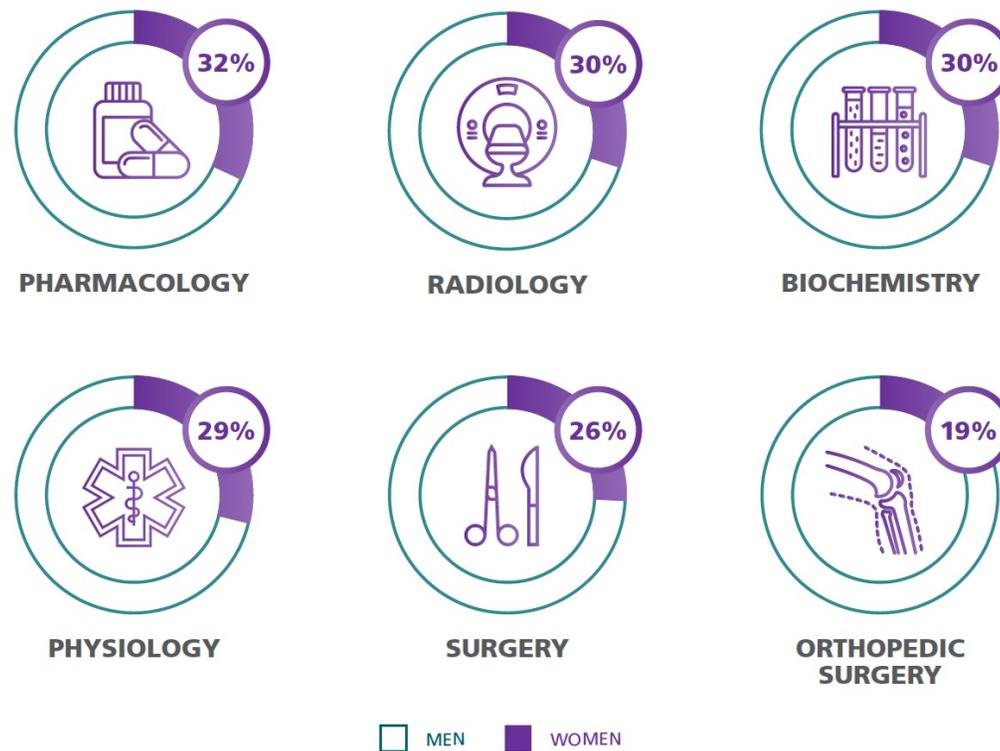


Representation of Women in Academic Medicine 2018-2019, AAMC

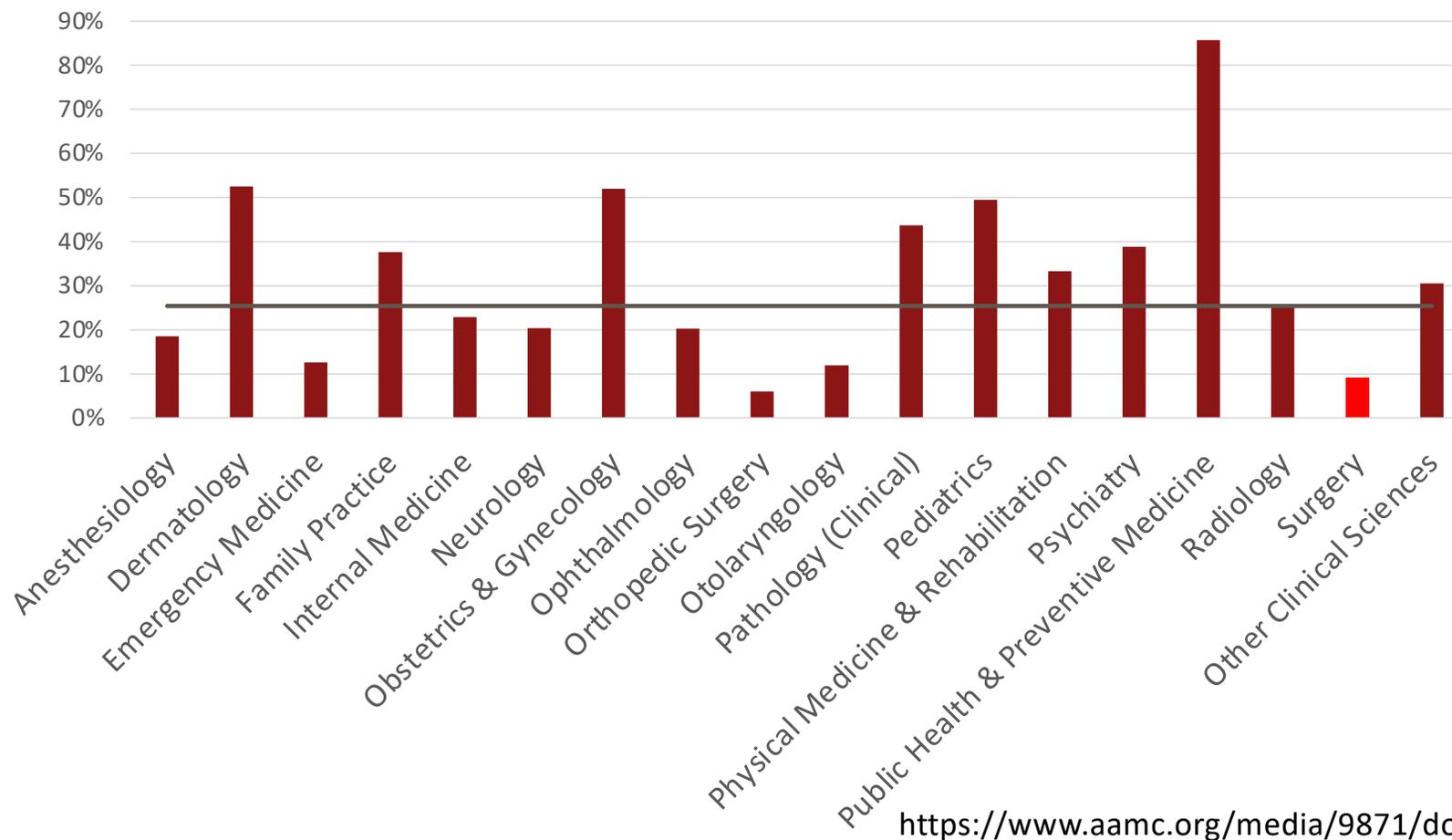


Departments With the Smallest Proportion of Full-Time Women Faculty, 2018

FIGURE 15



Percent of Chairs who are Women, by Specialty



<https://www.aamc.org/media/9871/download>

Heidi Roizen Case Study

Heidi Roizen was a successful Silicon Valley executive who became the subject of a business school case study.

Professor Frank Flynn, presented half his class with the case study with Heidi's name on it and gave half the class the same case study with her name changed to "Howard."

He then asked the class to evaluate Howard and Heidi's competency and likability.



Heidi Roizen Story

Students rated
bot Heidi and
Howard as
competent, but...

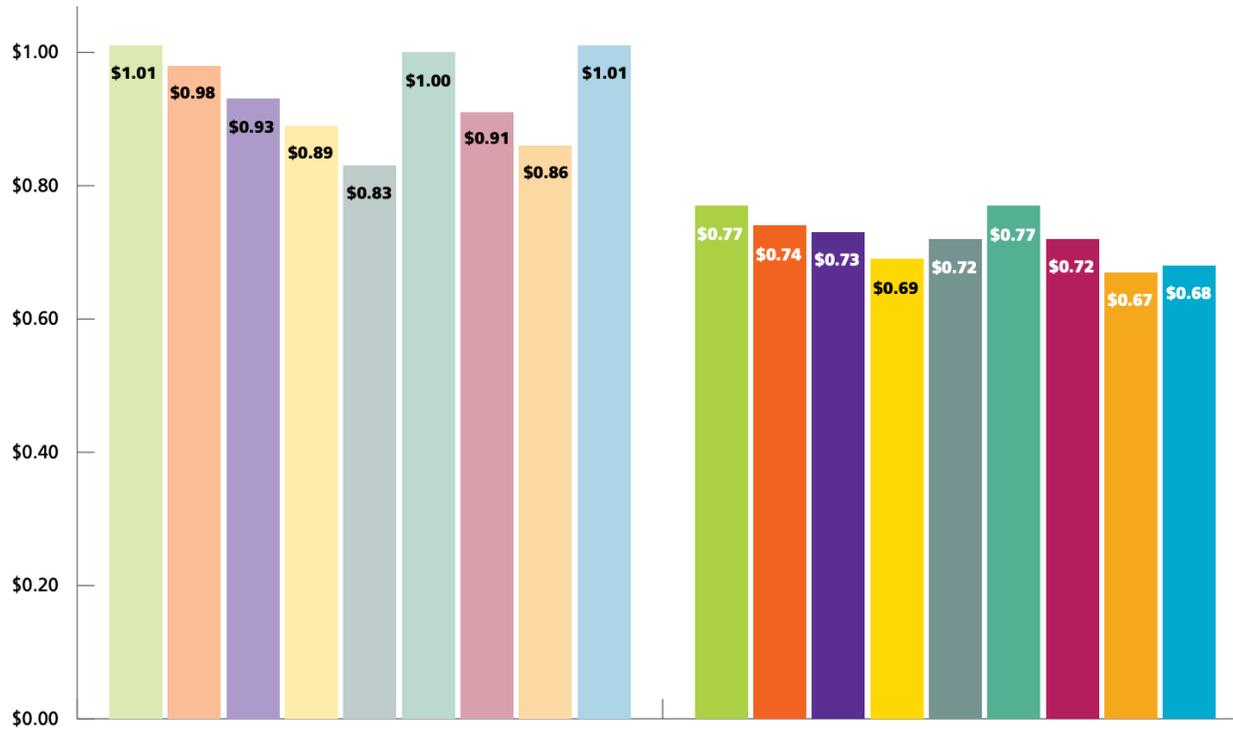
- *They did not like Heidi, but did like Howard*
- *Heidi was deemed to be selfish*
- *Heidi was not the type of person “you would want to hire or work for”*
- *Would like to grab a beer with Howard, but not Heidi*

A man has to be Joe McCarthy to be called ruthless... all a woman has to do is put you on hold.

— *Marlo Thomas* —

There are measurable consequences

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other
- Multiple Race - Hispanic
- Multiple Race - Non-Hispanic

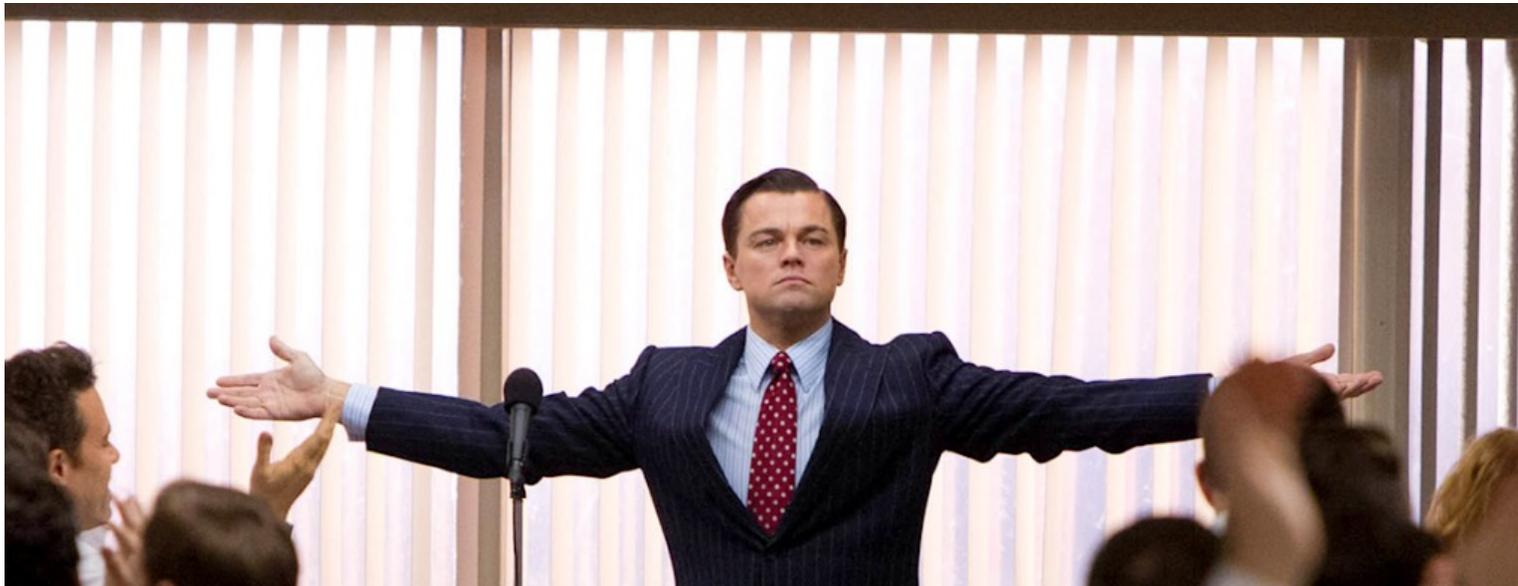


Why does this happen?

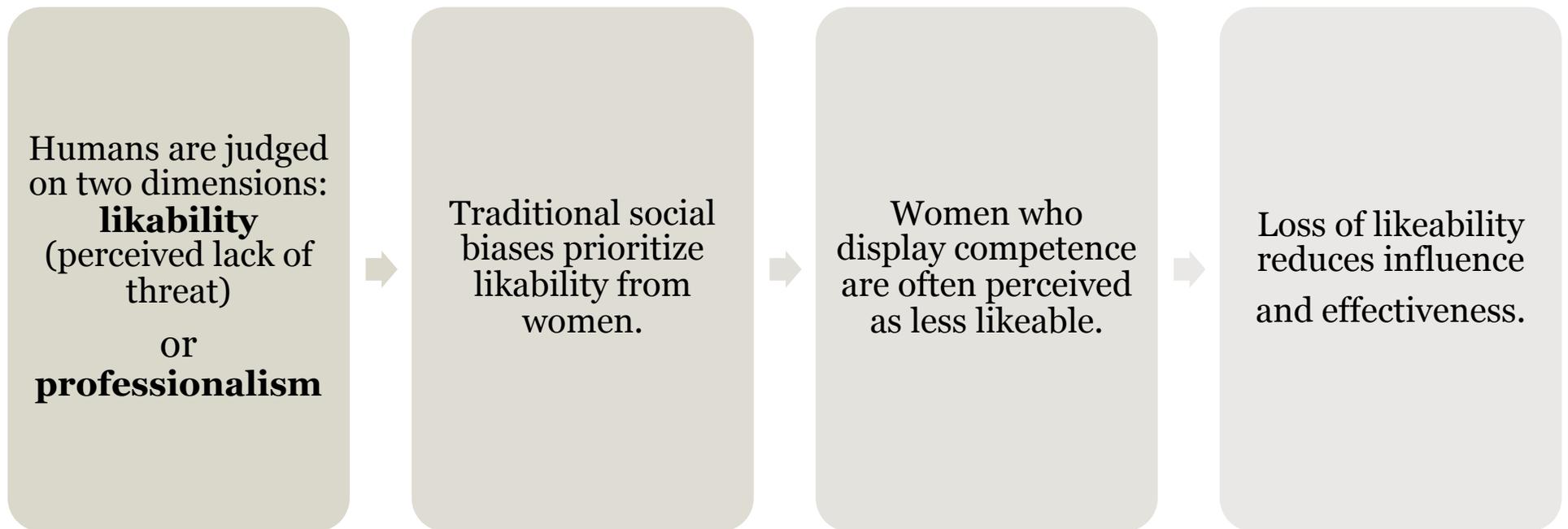
*My strong belief is that it is not evil,
intentional, or the fault of any one gender*

It's Not Personal.

Without deliberate thought, process and transparency, it is easy for humans to default to “like-hires-like” and “like-promotes-like”



Things such as negotiating are trickier for women



Poor negotiating is really an imbalance of approach along the likability/professional scale

- Emily T. Amanatullah in a 2010 study found that when women negotiate assertively, they experience backlash (from men and women)
- The study indicates that many women anticipate this backlash and adjust their negotiating behavior to mediate it.
- In these situations, “women hedge their assertiveness, using fewer competing tactics and obtaining lower outcomes,” the researchers state.

Women need to need to aggressively negotiate, but have to do so with different tactics

Women Can Also Hold Themselves Back

Internal report HP around applying for jobs with regards to meeting job specification requirements

- Men apply for jobs if they feel they meet **60%** of requirements
- Women apply only when they feel they meet **100%** of requirements

Tara Sophia Mohr in 2014 *Harvard Business Review* article, [Why Women Don't Apply for Jobs Unless They're 100% Qualified](#)

“ the issue may not be that women don't think they can do the job, but that they wouldn't get hired for the job because they thought that the required qualifications were... well, required qualifications.”

Tiara Syndrome

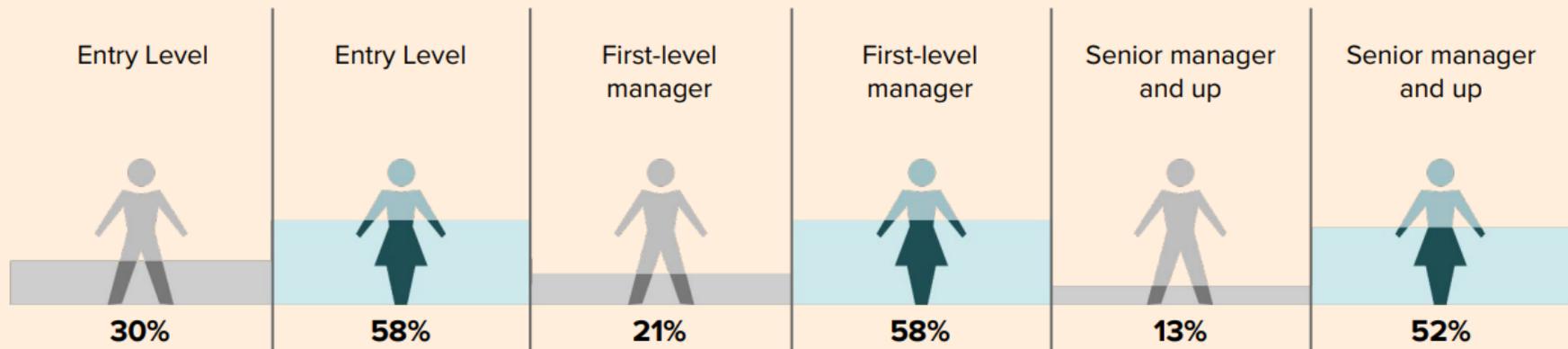
“Symptoms include keeping your head down, delivering excellent work and hoping that the right people will notice”



There is Also the “Second Shift”

AS MEN ADVANCE, THEY DO LESS HOUSEHOLD LABOR. WOMEN DON'T HAVE THAT LUXURY²⁵

% of men and women at different levels who are responsible for most or all of their family's housework and/or childcare



How this all affects women

- Women forgo the executive routes
- Women enter lower-earning specialties
- Women earn less
- Women have less retirement security
- Women face “invisible labor” at work (mentoring, comforting, organizing events, soothing egos)
- Women can feel as if they are failing at home

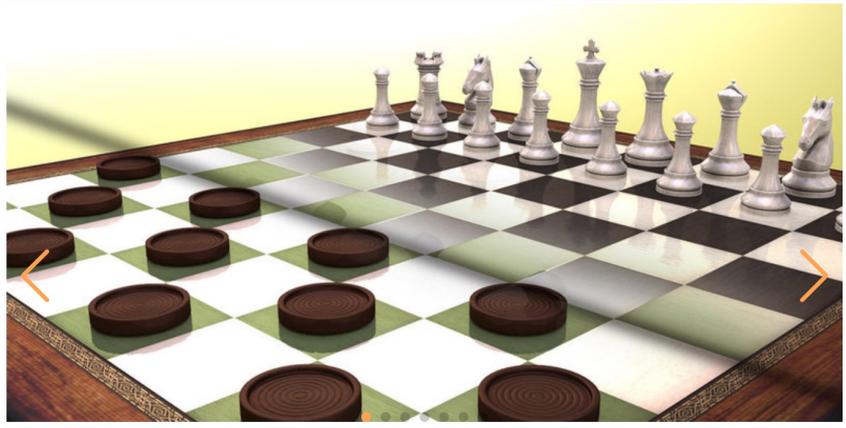
Solutions?

“

The most common way
people give up their power is
by thinking they don't have
any.

ALICE WALKER

Know the Game You Are Playing



- The board was set long ago in an era where the world was different
- ***Can't play checkers when chess is the game being played***
- With regards to hiring, promotion, and recognition → advocate, engage, self-promote, and play the game
- Have to balance likability

Advocate and Self-Promote

Own your own career

Copy your boss into relevant success emails

Share or write about it on LinkedIn or Twitter if you use a professional account

Share other people's successes

Keep a record of your accomplishments

Don't compare yourself to others

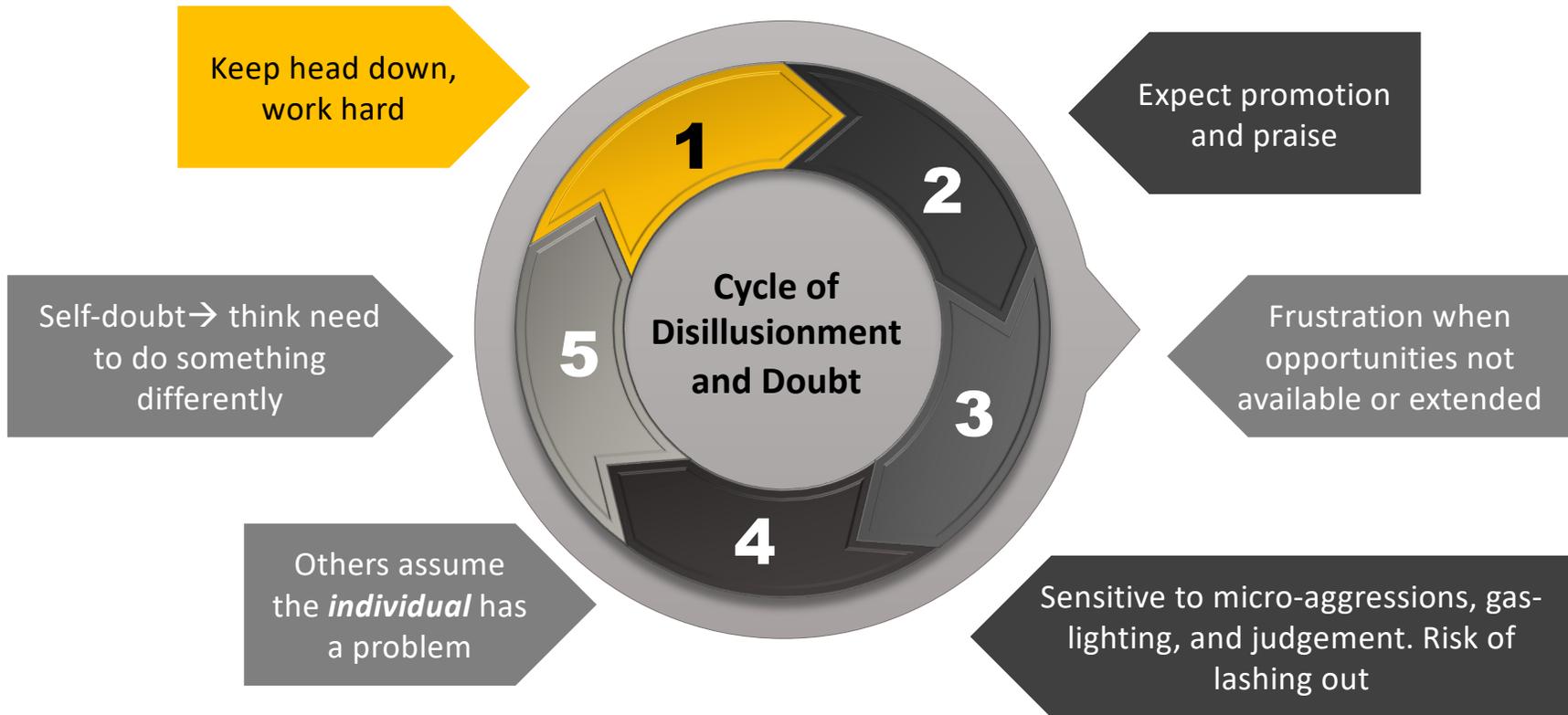
Maximize formal opportunities for negotiation (whether it is for a payrise or a promotion)

Build your personal brand and an internal network

Find a mentor and/or a sponsor

Avoid the Vicious Cycle

With each lap, the individual and others will doubt the individual's value



Summary

For women and men

- **Never react. Pause and reflect**
- **Never assume you know what somebody is thinking**
- **Play chess, not checkers**
- **Know the dynamic that exists and use it to empower your negotiations**
- **Identify in yourself and others the tiara syndrome or the cycle of doubt**