

Women Speak FOR THEMSELVES

Six Ways to Raise Your WSFT Voice In a “Women’s March” and “#MeToo” Era

#MeToo and the Women’s March have dominated coverage about women in recent months. While the pro-life woman’s perspective doesn’t often get reported in these conversations, we think there is some common ground for pro-life and pro-choice women alike in those movements. Read on to see positions about #MeToo and Women’s Marchers that women like us might share, and then how you can pivot from those points of common ground to share what we know about women’s authentic sexual freedom.

#MeToo:

1. One common problem we share with #MeToo advocates is this: whenever women object to *anything* to do with sex, we are labeled Puritans, sex-haters, or in the recent words of a famous French actress, Catherine Deneuve and many of her friends, “[enemies of sexual liberty](#).” The #MeToo Women have faced a lot of backlash for coming forward for saying some kinds of sexual activity among adults are unacceptable. We should support the women coming forward after assault when their detractors say they are making a big deal out of nothing, or that they are just sexual prudes for expecting more respectful behavior.

Women have an important voice in shaping sexual boundaries! We can say with the #MeToo women that **women aren’t frigid, aren’t prudes, and aren’t crazy for saying that people today need to have better sexual boundaries**, sexual boundaries that are commonly understood.

2. #MeToo women — a group undoubtedly including some pro-life women — are trying to eradicate violence, threats, and abuses of power. They are trying to restore true consent to sex. **So we share with them a mutual acknowledgment of the power of sex.** It is the demand precisely for sex, accompanied by threats or violence or abuse of power, which is at the heart of #MeToo’s complaints. Were the men involved demanding that we clean their offices or walk a mile under threat, women could rightly complain, but the violation would be of a different order— less soul destroying. So we share their acknowledgement that sexual consent is absolutely imperative. But at the same time, we hold that we need to go further.

What do we mean by further? Right now, as #MeToo women are trying to restore true consent to sex, pro-life women, whether or not they are a part of #MeToo, want to restore respect for the links that sex naturally has with love, marriage, and children. We want to eradicate the taking of the life that sex can create via abortion of unintended pregnancies. We therefore want to restore the link between sex and a mutual,

supportive commitment between potential parents, as realized in marriage. We want to restore the links sex has with love and mutual respect between partners.

We can tell #MeToo women that with these links restored, men and women will not have to wonder if there is consent to sex. If the links between sex, love, and marriage were clear to everyone, only people who at the very least knew each other well, and were thinking about the possibility of a future together would embark on sex. Consent—or the absence of consent—would be clear.

3. **When we hear #MeToo stories about consensual, but uncommitted, sex gone wrong, leading to women feeling disrespected or violated, we too agree that women deserve better than that.** We should demand that sex be as affirming as women want and deserve. BUT, this requires us to acknowledge something more than #MeToo often speaks about: to acknowledge the intrinsic power of sex, a power due to its physical and psychological links to love and new life. Due to these physical, psychological realities, the most affirming and mutually satisfying sex is quite frankly *never realized better* than in marriage. This isn't our opinion, but the findings of the most comprehensive [survey of American sexual practices](#) ever completed: a survey done at the University of Chicago in the 1990s and still widely respected today. It has truly sidelined the questionable Kinsey Report as a reliable source.

If the pro-life and #MeToo movements could join forces and together decry not only nonconsensual sex, but sex unmoored from love and commitment between men and women, sex unmoored from respect for the new life it creates, we would be an even more powerful force to be reckoned with.

Women's March:

1. So the first thing we have in common is that **a not insignificant number of the women attending the Women's March are pro-life!** We are not necessarily dealing with two totally different groups of women here. While the March organizers did disinvite pro-life women, namely the New Wave Feminists, we know that many women who DID march or who continue to participate in feminist activism are actually pro-life. In fact, one of our own WSFT members, Rachel, carried a pro-life sign at the Women's March in Texas and many of the Women's Marchers there came up to her and said they were pro-life too. So when people try to portray the pro-choice view as the *most significant* identifier of women in that group, we *know* that's not true.

We also know that **one wonderful example of women-led activism is the pro-life movement.** A woman started, and another still organizes, the [March for Life](#), the largest continuing human rights demonstration anywhere on the planet, drawing hundreds of thousands from all 50 states in the middle of winter every single year. It is primarily women who staff and volunteer at crisis pregnancy centers and post-abortion counseling and recovery programs. **Pro-life women also genuinely love women and their children and families.**

2. The Women's March is comprised of women unsatisfied with women's degradation in society, especially including sexual harassment and exploitation- that's where those pink hats came from! Similar to the #MeToo movement, **being unhappy with how women are treated today,**

especially as it relates to sexual exploitation, is common ground we share. We should acknowledge that.

But, we should add to the public discussion of #MeToo and the March, our intelligent and experiential knowledge about what benefits women in the long run, and what women long for and need. The truth is that **society-wide endorsement of sexual license with no links to love, life, marriage, and future family ultimately degrades women's freedom and happiness and facilitates the sexual exploitation of women.** Contraception—which separates sex from even the idea of children—acts on people's minds and bodies, seemingly eliminating the need for marital commitment before sex. But history and experience have shown that this separation doesn't work. In fact, children desperately need, and women and men need, sex that keeps in mind that sex is the place where nature put the creation of new life, and it's the place where a child's family structure begins.

Today, women of all backgrounds now believe low-commitment sex is the price of entry into any romantic relationship. Because people think that contraception "insures them" against pregnancy, the phenomenon of "risk-compensation" leads them to pursue more uncommitted sex; sex becomes more casual. This is a problem because by and large, regardless of where they stand politically, women don't enjoy casual sex as much as romantic, committed sex, and they want love and marriage in their lives. And children want both their mom and their dad stably in their life, which means in fact, according to all available data, a married mom and dad.

3. One of the many issues the Women's March talks about is women's economic inequality. **Uncommitted sex contributes to a poverty gap between single mothers and men.** How does this happen? Impoverished women, with fewer marriageable men in their communities, and fewer job and educational opportunities, are more likely than wealthier women to have the children they crave outside of marriage, and to bear the financial burden of raising a child on their own. This not only impacts their own economic prospects, but those of their children; the inequalities we see today between socioeconomic classes, and between races, are transmitted and solidified, in large part, via the family structures in which kids are raised.

Higher rates of non-marital parenting are both a cause and effect of poverty. The children of poor women are much more likely to be poor and to be unmarried parents themselves. This is a social justice issue! Contraception and abortion for the poor have not only not fixed their dilemma, but they have contributed to it by normalizing uncommitted sex. There are so many ways to talk with Women's Marchers about women's economic inequality after motherhood, and how current patterns of family formation disadvantage women.

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