



Module 5: Sexism and Homophobia

CLIO

Challenging Hostile Views and Fostering Civic Competences

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THE CLIO PROJECT

Clio is a project for the prevention and coping with right-wing extremism at vocational schools. Teachers and headmasters should be enabled to recognize and understand the corresponding positions among their students and to stand up for democratic values without fear. For this purpose, interdisciplinary experts from Austria, Poland, Croatia and Germany are developing various materials for vocational school teachers in close cooperation with the target group, such as an app, a blended learning training and a podcast. The main focus of this project is to build synergetic networks with other stakeholders in the individual countries in order to strengthen the schools and provide them with knowledge and professionally created material.



1. OVERVIEW

In this module you will learn...

- ... basic definitions of sexism.*
- ... the history of modern feminism.*
- ... how sexism can occur in everyday life.*
- ... what homophobia and toxic masculinity means.*
- ... why sexism and homophobia are dangerous for democracies.*
- ... how right-wing extremism and anti-feminist agendas are linked.*

At the end of the text, you will find exercises you can use while teaching about sexism and homophobia. The Module also provides useful resources for further information or help in concrete situations, as well as "further reading", if you would like to learn more.

Self-assessment questions

Answer the following questions to yourself:

- What do you understand by sexism? Give a short definition.
- Do you feel that sexism affects you in your everyday life? Think of a situation.
- Have you ever witnessed homophobic comments or even assaults? How did that make you feel?
- How do you think sexism contributes to the division of gender in your classroom?

2. WHAT DOES SEXISM MEAN? DEFINITIONS

Ever since #Metoo, the movement against sexual harassment, the term sexism seems to be all over social media and media reports. However, the term itself is much older and was coined during the second-wave feminism in the 1960s in the United States.¹

Unlike other terms that are frequently used in broad social debates and whose exact meaning often stay vague, as they are still subject of scholarly debate e.g., right-wing extremism, (see Module 1), most academic scholars share a similar understanding of sexism.

The sociologist Gina Masequesmay for example, defines sexism as

"[...] prejudice or discrimination based on sex or gender, especially against women and girls. [...] Sexism can be a belief that one sex is superior to or more valuable than another sex. It imposes limits on what men and boys can and should do and what women and girls can and

¹ Masequesmay, Gina (2014): Sexism. (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/sexism>). Accessed: 19 August 2020.

should do. [...] It functions to maintain patriarchy, or male domination, through ideological and material practices of individuals, collectives, and institutions that oppress women and girls on the basis of sex or gender. Such oppression usually takes the forms of economic exploitation and social domination.”²

Often sexual harassment, rape and other forms of sexual violence are also subsumed under the term sexism, as they can be regarded as an extreme form of this phenomenon.

Even if most academic scholars note the possibility that men can theoretically be negatively affected by sexism, there is a broad consensus in several fields that women and girls are the ones primarily affected by it. The real question behind this is the discussion if we live in a patriarchy, thus a social system that is dominated by men, or not – since men could not be structurally affected by sexism in a social system that structurally privileges them. This does not mean that women and girls cannot be sexist.³

The political scientist Carly Foster therefore concludes that “both men and women can experience sexism, but sexism against women is more pervasive.”⁴

Sex and gender

“Gender” is generally understood as “the behavioral, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated with one sex”

(<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/gender>, accessed: 19 August 2020)

and can also refer to the concept of “gender identity”. Since the concept of (biological) sex is limited to physical characteristics and therefore means the sex a person is assigned to at birth (female, male, intersex), the category of gender identity reflects the personal feeling of belonging to a particular gender and the gender role in society that is related therewith. Gender and sex may coincide in one person (cisgender), but do not necessarily have to (transgender).

Exercise: definition exercise

The US-American writer Allan G. Johnson suggests that

"the key test of whether something is sexist [...] lies in its consequences: if it supports male privilege, then it is by definition sexist. I specify 'male privilege' because in every known society where gender inequality exists, males are privileged over females.”⁵

Considering the definitions stated above, do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?⁶

² Masequesmay (2014).

³ Cf. hooks, bell (2000): *Feminism is for everybody. Passionate politics*, p. viii. (https://excoradfeminisms.files.wordpress.com/2010/03/bell_hooks-feminism_is_for_everybody.pdf). Accessed: 25 August 2020.

⁴ Foster, Carly (2011): “Sexism”. In Kurlan, George Thomas (ed.). *The Encyclopedia of Political Science*.

⁵ Johnson, Allan G. (2000): „Sexism”. *The Blackwell Dictionary of Sociology*.

⁶ For further reading: Di Blasi, Luca (2014): “Die andere Sexismus-Debatte – Essay” (<https://www.bpb.de/apuz/178668/die-andere-sexismus-debatte>). Accessed: 19 August 2020.

3. A SHORT HISTORY OF MODERN FEMINISM

As noted previously, the term sexism emerged from the “second-wave” feminism (1960s through 1980s) in the United States and was most likely coined as an equivalent to the civil rights movement’s term racism⁷ (See Module 3). The history of modern feminism is commonly divided into three waves.⁸

The first wave of feminism arose in the late 19th and early 20th centuries “out of an environment of urban industrialism and liberal, socialist politics”⁹ with the ambition of establishing the same human rights for women that were granted to men. It culminated in the introduction of the women’s right to vote in some European countries and the US after World War I. The timeline of woman’s suffrage on a global scale however extends across the whole 20th century.

Exercise: Worldwide Women’s Suffrage

Work with the interactive timeline on the global women’s suffrage (<https://www.historic-newspapers.com/womens-suffrage-timeline/>). Did you learn anything new and is there anything that surprised you?

Do you know which year women got allowed to vote in your country?

The second wave of (western) feminism took place from the 1960s through the 1980s and early ‘90s. It emerged out of the anti-war and civil rights movements and “the growing self-consciousness of a variety of minority groups around the world”.¹⁰ Although the second wave, mainly advocating for social equality, reproductive rights and sexual liberation, was more radical in its demeanor, it was also marginalised because it was accompanied and incorporated by other social movements, e.g., the Black Power movement or the anti-Vietnam war movement. While the first wave was mostly initiated by Western middle class, cisgender (see Glossary or info box “Sex and Gender”) and white women, the second wave was more diversified and was also launched by women of colour and working-class women. Important to mention here is that this historical emergence of equal rights and feminism happened differently in Central and Eastern Europe countries such as Poland. The state socialist regimes guaranteed equal rights of women and men since the late 1940s. To create more workforce, equality laws were introduced by the communist regime since “women as well as men were required to become productive members of society”.¹¹ To facilitate women entering the workforce, legislation was passed to “guarantee [...] women’s equality in society and marriage”.¹² This means that, until the fall

⁷ Cf. Masequesmay (2014).

⁸ Cf. Rampton, Martha (2008): Four waves of feminism. (<https://www.pacificu.edu/magazine/four-waves-feminism>). Accessed 9 August 2020.

⁹ Rampton (2008).

¹⁰ Rampton (2008).

¹¹ UNIFEM (2006): The Story Behind the Numbers: Women and Employment in Central and Eastern Europe and the Western Commonwealth of Independent States. 12. (<https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/46cadad40.pdf>). Accessed: 13 March 2021.

¹² UNIFEM (2006): 12.

of the socialist regimes, women were ensured equal access to education and the job market. To a great extent, this is a very different approach to feminism than in Western European Countries.¹³

The third wave began in the mid-90s and was influenced by post-colonial and post-modern discourses. Hence, in this period a lot of constructs were challenged and dissolved, including the idea of universal womanhood, body, gender, sexuality, and heteronormativity (see Glossary or info box “Heteronormativity”).¹⁴

Even if it is still scholarly debated whether the rise of the internet has created a fourth wave of feminism around the 2010s, the increased usage of the internet has surely facilitated and accelerated feminist endeavors.¹⁵ Nevertheless, recent feminist demands to a much greater sense include intersectional approaches, which already were developed during the third wave.¹⁶ Intersectionality in feminism means that one person can be affected by different forms of discrimination on the basis of skin colour, gender, religion, sexual orientation or disability and that these different forms of discrimination should not be regarded as isolated but as overlapping and mutually dependent categories. The feminist scholar and activist bell hooks, for example, concluded in the 1980s that the experiences of working-class Black and white women are fundamentally different.¹⁷

During the complex history of modern feminism, that was shortly depicted above, different currents with various demands and opinions evolved. Often the wave narrative itself is criticised because it focuses primarily on Western feminist movements.¹⁸ Currents of feminism are, for example, radical feminism, liberal feminism, intersectional feminism and Black feminism. While Black feminism, just like the term suggests, describes the movement of black women “fighting for equal rights in a society that still oppress the black people”¹⁹, intersectional feminism is the term for the combination of different feminist movements focused on the general oppression of women across different sectors of their society while acknowledging the individual struggles women face in each sector. The liberal feminist movement is centered around the belief that women are entitled to same rights and opportunities that men have, “the way to guarantee these rights is through social and political reforms”²⁰, since liberal feminists believe that the state plays a major role in the

Heteronormativity

Heteronormativity means “the idea that heterosexual attraction and relationships are the normal form of sexuality. It is rooted in a linked essential, dichotomous understanding of sexuality (a person is either heterosexual or homosexual) and gender (a person is either a man or a woman) and the perception that these things are fixed and unchanging.”

Barker, Meg (2014): Heteronormativity. In: Teo T. (eds) Encyclopedia of Critical Psychology. Springer, New York, NY. (https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-5583-7_134). Accessed: 20 August 2020.

¹³ Cf. UNIFEM (2006). 12-13.

¹⁴ Cf. Rampton (2008).

¹⁵ Cf. Munro, Ealasaid (2013): “Feminism: A Fourth Wave? *Political Insight*. 4 (2): 22–25. (<https://www.psa.ac.uk/psa/news/feminism-fourth-wave>). Accessed: 20 August 2020.

¹⁶ Munro (2013).

¹⁷ Cf. Munro (2013).

¹⁸ Cf. Evans, Elizabeth; Chamberlain, Prudence (2015): Critical Waves: Exploring Feminist Identity, Discourse and Praxis in Western Feminism. *Social Movement Studies*. 14 (4): 396–409. (https://research-information.bris.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/50807653/critical_waves_final_revisions.pdf). Accessed: 20 August 2020.

¹⁹ Trench (2018).

²⁰ Trench (2018).

persistence of inequality. The most absolute and unapologetic form of feminism is radical feminism, as it suggests that only humans being born as biologically female are able to comprehend women's struggles in society. The main idea of this movement is "that the only thing women have in common are their bodies and its functions, which defines the treatment you will receive by the society [...]"^{21, 22}

4. FORMS OF SEXIST DISCRIMINATION

Blatant, covert and subtle sexism

As stated above, there are different forms of sexism. The sociologists Nijole V. Benokraitis and Joe R. Feagin differentiate between **blatant**, **covert** and **subtle** sexism. While all three forms describe the unfair and unequal treatment of women compared to men, the main differences lie in how obvious the discrimination is carried out and if it is intended or not.

- **Blatant sexism** = the obvious and intended discrimination of women
- **Covert sexism** = intended but deliberately hidden
- **Subtle sexism** = hard to be recognised at all because it is deeply rooted in our society and therefore appears to be "normal".²³

In practice, these different forms of sexism often overlap. An example for blatant sexism can be the gender pay gap, which "represents the difference between average hourly pay for women and men before tax across the economy as a whole."²⁴ The gender pay gap therefore illustrates how women are discriminated in the labour market because their work is still frequently seen as less valuable. Also, women often tend to work in low-wage sectors, e.g., the care or retail sector. Data shows that in 2018 there has been a gender pay gap of 15,7 % in the European Union in the private sector. The Austrian private sector showed a difference of 19,6 % in 2018, while the gender pay gap in the German private sector amounting to 20,9% is even higher. Compared to this, the differences are substantially less in

²¹ Trench (2018).

²² Cf. Trench, Mel (2018): The Different Currents of Feminism: A Brief Resume. (<https://www.hercampus.com/school/casper-libero/different-currents-feminism-brief-resume>). Accessed: 20 August 2020.

²³ Cf. Benokraitis, Nijole V./Feagin, Joe R. (1999). Modern sexism (2nd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall. Quoted after Swim, Janet K./Mallet, Robyn/ Stangor, Charles (2004): Understanding Subtle Sexism: Detection and Use of Sexist Language. In: Sex Roles, Vol. 51, No. 3/4, pp. 117-128, p. 117. (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227040305_Understanding_Subtle_Sexism_Detection_and_Use_of_Sexist_Language). Accessed: 21 August 2020.

²⁴ European Commission (2009): EU launches campaign to tackle gender pay gap. (https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_09_341). Accessed: 24 August 2020.

Croatia (10,5%) and Poland (8,8%).²⁵ The adjusted gender pay gap in Austria, thus the difference between average hourly pay for women and men in regard to position, sector and working hours is still 13,6 %²⁶.

Exercise: gender pay gap in the EU per country

Read the factsheet “Equal pay? Time to close the gap!” by the European Commission and look at the chart “Gender pay gap per EU country” on p. 2 of the fact sheet (https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/factsheet-gender_pay_gap-2019.pdf).

Do you have an explanation as to why the gender pay gap differs so strongly within the EU?

How do you think sexism plays a role in how many female/male students are in this class?

How is gender represented in your area of work?

Do you think there is a pay gap in your area of work? Can you find numbers on this online?

Less visible and therefore an example for covert sexism, is the gender data gap. The British campaigner and writer Caroline Criado-Perez exposed drastic gender inequality by presenting various statistical data. In her book “Invisible women: exposing data bias in a world designed for men”, she uncovered how research from various fields structurally neglects to collect data on women with consequences that “range from inconveniently to deadly”²⁷. Thus, for example, British women are 50% more likely to be misdiagnosed when having a heart attack because trials on heart failure mainly use male participants. Also, the design of cars is oriented around the physique of a “typical man”. Although men are more likely to be involved in an accident, the probability of getting seriously injured is almost 50% higher for women involved in collisions. Technical innovations as well have turned a blind eye on gender aspects. The average smartphone is too big for most women’s hands and speech-recognition software like Siri and Google Assistant are more likely to recognise and understand male voices as they are trained with them.²⁸ The author, however, also deals with the political sphere in her book. She states

²⁵ Cf. Statista (2020): Gender Pay Gap: Verdienstabstand zwischen Männern und Frauen in den Ländern der Europäischen Union (EU) im Jahr 2018. (<https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/151287/umfrage/gender-pay-gap-in-der-eu-2008/>). Accessed: 24 August 2020 and Statistik Austria (2020): Einkommen. (https://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/menschen_und_gesellschaft/soziales/gender-statistik/einkommen/index.html). Accessed: 24 August 2020.

²⁶ Der Standard (2020): Equal Pay Day – Mercer: Bereinigter Gender-Pay-Gap bei 6,6 Prozent. (<https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000115005061/mercero-bereinigter-gender-pay-gap-bei-6-6-prozent>). Accessed: 24 August 2020.

²⁷ Bushwick, Sophie (2019): The Pitfalls of Data’s Gender Gap. (<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-pitfalls-of-datas-gender-gap/>). Accessed: 28 September 2020.

²⁸ Cf. Glaser, Eliane (2019): Invisible Women by Caroline Criado Perez – a world designed for men. (<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/feb/28/invisible-women-by-caroline-criado-perez-review>). Accessed: 24 August 2020.

that the political systems we live in are shaped by a lack of female representation. This results in passing fewer laws that address the needs of women. It can be concluded that this misrepresentation skews the democratic process and impedes equal political participation.

Subtle sexism: What does sexism look like in our daily lives?

Sexism is not always as obvious as it is in sexual assault and sexual harassment. Everyday sexism can be more subtle because it is somehow “normal” and does not seem unusual. And precisely this is the problem. Sexism is rooted so deeply in our societies that we might not even notice it in our daily lives. This does not change the fact that (especially) women are facing discrimination because of it.

The use of sexist language can be an example of subtle sexism. It “consists of speech that reinforces and perpetuates gender stereotypes and status differences between women and men [...]”²⁹ and therefore legitimates the existing social inequalities. Studies show that sexist language is learned at an early age and can be designated as a linguistic habit. There are various reasons for the use of sexist language³⁰:

- tradition
- it is firmly rooted in written and spoken language and might be difficult to change
- lack of knowledge what sexist language constitutes
- it is not believed that sexist language exists
- (conscious and unconscious) protection of established social hierarchies

Exercise: speech of Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

Watch the video of Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez’s speech responding to the use of abusive language towards her by Rep. Ted Yoho (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LI4ueUtkRQ0>) and answer the following questions.

- How does Ocasio-Cortez define sexist language?
- Why is sexist language a problem according to Ocasio-Cortez?

Austria: Article on sexist incident “Ex-Grüne Sigrid Maurer wurde von Mann sexuell belästigt und muss nun 4.000 Euro an ihn bezahlen”

(<https://ze.tt/ex-gruene-sigrid-maurer-wurde-von-mann-sexuell-belaestigt-und-muss-nun-4-000-euro-an-ihn-bezahlen/>)

- Read the article and answer the following questions.
- What different forms of sexism are mentioned in the article?
- How has “victim-blaming” played a role over the course of this lawsuit?

²⁹ Swim/Mallet/Stangor (2004), p. 117.

³⁰ Swim/Mallet/Stangor (2004), p. 117.

- Can you imagine why it might be difficult for women to file lawsuits against sexual harassment online after reading this article? What obstacles could they face?

Croatia: Former Croatian Minister of Education has read aloud some horrible messages she received via Facebook. This was in 2019 around International Women's Day.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=252544428982897>

- What is the attitude of the commentators towards the Minister?
- What sexist attitudes do you notice?

Germany:

A video of a speech by Christian Lindner in which he stripped former FDP Secretary General Linda Teuteberg of her position. He felt compelled to apologize afterwards, insisting that it was an unfortunate formulation and not sexism.

https://www.focus.de/politik/deutschland/fdp-christian-lindner-sorgt-mit-verungluecktem-altherren-witz-fuer-kritik-im-netz_id_12451244.html

Exercises:

- 1) What is the focus point of criticism of Linder's statements?
- 2) How does Lindner justify his statements?
- 3) How does the situation fit into the theory of subtle sexism?

Poland

Exercise 1: forms of sexism

A video prepared by Wolna Szkoła, the coalition of non-governmental organizations. In the spot you can hear a quote from what the current Minister of Education said in 2019 about male/female gender roles.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=190156403068064>



- 1) In your opinion, do such words fit the definition of sexism? Why?
- 2) What do you think about expressing this kind of opinions by politicians responsible for the education of children and youth?
- 3) What other examples for blatant, covert and subtle sexism can you think of?

Poland

Exercise 2: forms of sexism?

In Poland in 2013, the General Directorate for National Roads and Motorways published the film "Wyspa", which was part of the "Roads of Trust" campaign. Authors decided to use the wordplays related to the word "breast (piersi)". Its heroes are two young men driving a car. They arrive at a pedestrian crossing followed by a scantily dressed woman with large breasts. Men staring at her say: "When pieeeeeesi go, it's always a stop. - They're gone, move on, the woodpecker." At the end of the film, the voiceover says "Even a woodpecker knows that you need to slow down before crossing."

<https://www.polskieradio24.pl/5/3/Artykul/1002621,Kontrowersyjna-kampania-GDDKiA-KozlowskaRajewicz-uwlacza-godnosci-kobiet-i-mezczyzn>

- 1) What impact could such a campaign have on strengthening stereotypes? In relation to whom: women or men? Why?

Comment:

The Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment spoke on the matter: "These products strengthen the existing stereotypes about women, do not build a sense of social responsibility and do not ensure a minimum of good manners, and do not take into account the horizontal principle of the European Union regarding equality between women and men, especially in the field of combating these stereotypes. It shows men as irrational and having no control, especially when representatives of the opposite sex are near, which significantly offends the dignity of men as well."

- 2) How would you comment what the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment said?

- 3) What arguments could be used to convince someone that the spot is sexist?

Exercise: react

The footage shows Janusz Korwin-Mikke, a Member of the European Parliament from Poland who is explaining why women should earn less than men. He is saying during the EP

gender pay gap debate that women are weaker, smaller, less intelligent, and for these reasons they should earn less.

Polish MEP Korwin-Mikke: Women must earn less than men because... - YouTube

[Polish MEP Korwin-Mikke: Women must earn less than men because... - YouTube](#)

1) How would you react to such statements as:

-a voter

-a member of the European Parliament?

2) What do you think Parliament's reaction was?

3) Is it worth responding to such situations? Why?

Comment:

The statement by a Polish MEP, in which he discriminated against women, cost him the loss of a parliamentary allowance for 30 days, the suspension of his mandate and a ban on speaking on behalf of the European Parliament.

Exercise: The everyday sexism project (<https://everydaysexism.com/>)

Read the following posts on the website "The Everyday sexism project":

K

29th July 2020

I'm only 15, but I'm only now realising how many really creepy experiences I've actually had, thinking they were normal.

This might be specific to my age group and where I live, but I'll say it anyway.

I've been taught to feel embarrassed for saying no to guys, and always feel bad when I stop a guy from doing something they want to do, and they get mad, as if I owe it to them.

At parties I see, way too often, a guy wanting to kiss or do something with a girl, and the girl saying no at LEAST 10 times before she eventually gives up. (I've only experienced guys do this, but I assume it could go both ways, I just never see a guy feeling shame or embarrassment for rejecting a girl.)

And people seem to never give this a second thought, just shrugging it off, "they were drunk". Then I feel dumb for whining about it.

Hold people accountable please, it's not just "boys will be boys" 😞

Tags: [Public space](#) [School](#)

Anon

29th July 2020

As one of the only females in the service (and the only female in a senior position) I was repeatedly told by male members of staff that "we shouldn't have girls working here".

When the team manager announced that he has recruited someone to the vacant post we had, a male member of staff said "please tell me it's a man?". The manager laughed and said "beggars can't be choosers!" and apologised for appointing a woman (who is extremely experienced and is actually over qualified for the post).

Tags: [Forensic Mental Health](#) [mental health](#) [NHS](#) [Workplace](#)

Laura

29th July 2020

Today my colleague introduced my female colleague and I as 'girls' to a new client. We are both almost 30 years old.

Tags: [misogyny](#) [Work](#) [Workplace](#)

Why can the situations Anon, K and Laura have experienced be described as sexist? Elaborate.

Another example for subtle or everyday sexism is the gender stereotyping of adults and particularly children. Thus, for example the toys children play with have an impact on how they see themselves, what skills they learn and how their brains physically develop. Some psychologists suggest that this could provide an explanation why certain professions are male-dominated and others are female-dominated. Scholars have for example also researched why girls generally perform worse in STEM subjects (STEM = Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). The reason for this might be merely caused by the self-assessment of female students concerning these subjects which is influenced by a sexist culture. When girls are regularly confronted with the idea that they “naturally” perform worse than boys in these subjects, it is highly likely that these societal perceptions do indeed influence their performance (self-fulfilling prophecy). Furthermore, it can be stated that girls might have other needs in the school environment for different reasons and that educational methods or materials in STEM subjects have to be re-thought and adapted to gender specific requirements.³¹ The same applies for subjects in which boys generally perform worse, like for example language lessons. Tackling gender inequality in education and in the subsequent choice of profession does not necessarily mean providing equal conditions for girls or boys but it addresses gender specific needs without reproducing sexist prejudices.

Exercise: reflection

While teaching, have you ever experienced boys and girls handling certain tasks differently? Why do you think that might be the case?

Gender stereotyping however goes much further than that. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the UN (OHCHR) defines gender stereotyping as “the practice of ascribing to an individual woman or man specific attributes, characteristics, or roles by reason only of her or his membership in the social group of women or men. Gender stereotyping is wrongful when it results in a violation or violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.”³² As examples, the OHCHR names the failure to criminalise marital rape that originates in the perception of women as the sexual property of their husbands and the failure to accurately investigate, prosecute and sentence sexual violence, which is linked to the idea that women only would have to dress and behave more prudently in order to protect themselves from sexual violence.³³ Gender stereotyping therefore has consequences that reach beyond subtle sexism.

Exercise: Nurture or Nature? (<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/magazine-40936719/gender-specific-toys-do-you-stereotype-children>)

³¹ Cf. Greiner, Lena (2018): Falsches Selbstbild. Wie die Erziehung die Mädchen schlechter rechnen lässt. (<https://www.spiegel.de/lebenundlernen/schule/mathe-warum-maedchen-schlechter-abschneiden-a-1221366.html>). Accessed: 29 September 2020.

³² OHCHR: Gender stereotyping. (<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/WRGS/Pages/GenderStereotypes.aspx>). Accessed: 29 September 2020.

³³ Cf. OHCHR: Gender stereotyping. (<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/WRGS/Pages/GenderStereotypes.aspx>). Accessed: 29 September 2020.

Watch the BBC video “Gender specific toys: do you stereotype children?” and answer the following questions for yourself.

- What disadvantages result from the stereotyping of children for girls and women?
- Can you also come up disadvantages for boys and men?

Exercise: ArtActivist Barbie

Under the Twitter account @BarbieReports, a Barbie doll investigates how women are underrepresented in art and culture and how sexism is prevalent in general in this field (<https://twitter.com/barbiereports?lang=de>). Look at the different posts and consider which form of sexism – blatant, covert or subtle – applies in this case.

5. WHAT DOES HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA MEAN?

Closely intertwined with the phenomenon of sexism is the concept of homophobia and transphobia. While homophobia can be defined as culturally constructed fear of or prejudice against homosexuals that can manifest e.g., in legal restrictions, bullying, hate speech or violence against homosexuals, the term transphobia describes the equivalent hostility towards trans people. Intolerance towards (male) homosexuals emerged particularly in the Middle Ages, mostly among the adherents of Christianity and Islam.³⁴ Even though the human rights situation has improved over the last decades, LGBTIQ+ (see info box) around the world are still discriminated legally and in their everyday life and become victims of hate crimes. Remarkably, homosexuality was listed as a mental disorder by the World Health Organisation (WHO) until the early '90s and transgender identity until 2018. Furthermore, it is still a frequent practice to perform medically unnecessary sex reassignment surgeries on intersex babies – thus babies that are born with sexual characteristics that are not typically male or female.

LGBTIQ+

The term refers to all people that do not identify with the heteronormative standards (see info box) of the societies we live in whether because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. The acronym stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans(gender), intersex, and queer people. Sometimes an A is added for asexual people (low or absent sexual desire). The + indicates the inclusive dimension of the concept which is why more initials have been added to the term in recent years. Even if the term suggests an entity, LGBTIQ+ are not a homogenous group with the same needs and demands. What they do have in common, however, is the structural discrimination they face in our societies, which are culturally shaped by a general hostility towards them that ranges from legal discrimination, unequal treatment in all areas of life to even violent assaults (hate crimes). The terms homo-, bi-, trans-, and interphobia describe the specific forms of discrimination and hostility for each “group”.

³⁴ Cf. Anderson (2011).

Small excursus: Legal situation of LGBTIQ+ in Europe

Even if the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (ECHR) grants the same fundamental rights to everyone regardless of someone's sex or sexual orientation (Article 21 - Non-discrimination), the individual EU states have different laws regarding any greater protection. However, it is important to understand that legal protection is only one side of the coin. The other side is how these legal frameworks are implemented and complied with. Also, it should be noted that lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender and intersex people might be faced with very different everyday problems regarding fundamental rights issues.

Austria	<p>In 2004, the Austrian Federal Equal Treatment Act was reformed, prohibiting any forms of discrimination on the basis of sexual discrimination in the field of employment and profession. The Vienna anti-discrimination law even goes one step further and prohibits discrimination in all spheres of life that are subjected to governmental regulations, e.g., access to goods and services, health, education and social issues.</p> <p>Since 2010, same-sex couples have the possibility to enter into a registered partnership and in 2019 same-sex marriage was legally introduced.³⁵</p> <p>Since 2009, the so-called sex-reassignment surgery is no longer a prerequisite for transgender persons to change their first name and their legal sex. In practice, the authority which decides whether or not to approve the change of the legal sex, rests with the respective civil registry office.³⁶</p> <p>In 2018, the Austrian constitutional court, recognised intersexuality and requested a third option for the legal sex status. Furthermore, the court confirmed intersexuality as a variation of human diversity and opposed cosmetic, non-consensual medical surgeries on intersex babies.³⁷</p>
Germany	<p>Following the Nazi dictatorship, both German states adopted Paragraph 175, which originated from the Reich Criminal Code of 1872 and made homosexuality a punishable offense.^{38 39} The FRG, however, adhered to the Nazi-era paragraph until 1969, which provided for up to 10 years in prison in the case of "aggravated</p>

³⁵ Cf. Stadt Wien (not dated): Rechtliche Situation - Lesben, Schwule und Transgender-Personen.

(<https://www.wien.gv.at/menschen/queer/sexuelle-orientierung/recht/>). Accessed: 18 November 2020.

³⁶ Cf. Stadt Wien (not dated): Personenstandsänderung. (<https://www.wien.gv.at/menschen/queer/transgender/geschlechtswechsel/rechtlich/personenstand.html>). Accessed: 18 November 2020.

³⁷ Cf. Stadt Wien (not dated): Intergeschlechtlichkeit (Intersexualität). (<https://www.wien.gv.at/menschen/queer/intersexualitaet/>). Accessed: 18 November 2020.

³⁸ Cf. Könné, Christian (2018): Schwule und Lesben in der DDR und der Umgang des SED-Staates mit Homosexualität. (<https://www.bpb.de/geschichte/zeitgeschichte/deutschlandarchiv/265466/schwule-und-lesben-in-der-ddr>). Accessed: 17 March 2021.

³⁹ Cf. Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (2014). 1994: Homosexualität nicht mehr strafbar.

	<p>fornication". In the GDR, on the other hand, the interpretation was that of the Weimar Republic, and thus a version of the paragraph that was more relaxed than that of the Nazi regime was adhered to.⁴⁰ In both states, homosexual persons were not recognised as victims of the Nazi dictatorship and were denied membership in victims' associations.^{41 42}</p> <p>In the GDR, thanks to the initiative of Rudolf Klimmer and the support of prominent homosexual men such as the national prize winner of the GDR Ludwig Renn, Paragraph 175 was formally repealed in the Saxon state parliament in 1951. However, this was never implemented. Until 1968, the Paragraph continued to be applied and was used specifically to discredit and condemn political opponents. Among the population, too, resentment against homosexuals was enormous.⁴³</p> <p>With the reform of the penal code in 1969, Paragraph 175 was amended for the first time in the Federal Republic. Homosexuality among adult males over 21 was now no longer a criminal offense. In 1973, the age was lowered to 18. As a special regulation, this meant that adolescents were not granted maturity for same-sex sexual acts at the age of 16, as it is the case for heterosexual acts.⁴⁴</p> <p>Paragraph 175 continued to be applied in Western Germany until the 1990s. In 1992, a small inquiry of the German government revealed that in 1990, 96 people were convicted on the basis of Paragraph 175 in 125 proceedings in the territory of the old Federal Republic, and ten men were imprisoned for. It was not until the reunification of the two German states and the merging of their legal systems that Paragraph 175 was finally removed from the Criminal Code in March 1994 following various legislative initiatives. Since then, uniform periods of protection for minors have applied to sexual relations, irrespective of sexual orientation.⁴⁵</p> <p>The possibility of a "registered civil partnership" for homosexual couples has existed in Germany since 2001. In legislation, registered partnerships are equal to marriages with regard to inheritance tax, but not with regard to income tax and family law.⁴⁶</p> <p>The opening of marriage for same-sex partnerships was passed in the Bundestag on June 30th 2017. In a vote, in which the party discipline was suspended, 393 members of parliament voted in favour of the opening, 226 against. After this</p>
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⁴⁰ Cf. Köne (2018).

⁴¹ Cf. Köne (2018).

⁴² Cf. Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (2014).

⁴³ Cf. Köne (2018).

⁴⁴ Cf. Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (2014).

⁴⁵ Cf. Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (2014).

⁴⁶ Cf. Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (2014).

	<p>decision in June 2017, the CSU in particular considered taking legal action against the opening of marriage before the Supreme Court. However, the CSU refrained from such a lawsuit after a self-commissioned legal opinion by two professors of constitutional law was available.⁴⁷</p> <p>Since the end of 2018, intersexual people in Germany have the possibility to choose the option "diverse" in addition to the genders "male" and "female" when entering the civil status register, the so-called "third option". In order to be able to subsequently adjust the civil status to "diverse", medical proof must be provided that certifies a so-called "variant of gender development". However, according to the will of the legislator, the subjective gender identity should not be allowed to play a role in the change of personal status. When creating the "third option", the legislator thus explicitly excluded transgender or non-binary persons in the explanatory memorandum to the law.⁴⁸</p>
Poland	<p>Article 32 of the Constitution "Equality and non-discrimination" states that everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal treatment by public authorities. Discrimination is the inferior treatment as a result a personal quality. It is a qualified form of unequal treatment of a person on the basis of some personal feature, without rational justification. The most frequently mentioned grounds for discrimination include gender, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, denomination, belief, disability, age, sexual orientation or gender identity, but they may also include other personal characteristics such as social origin or material status. No person may be discriminated against in political, social or economic life for any reason.</p> <p>Ever since the introduction of its new constitution (Kodeks karny) in 1932, consensual same-sex acts were decriminalised and homosexuality has been legal in Poland since, with the exception of the time period of German occupation (1939-1945). With the new Polish Penal Code of 1932, the age of consent for homosexual sexual activities was also set to 15 years. Until 1991, homosexuality was on the list of diseases in Poland, but after was also removed. Today, homosexuals</p>

⁴⁷ Cf. Mangold, A. K. (2018). Stationen der Ehe für alle in Deutschland. Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung: Dossier Homosexualität. (<https://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/gender/homosexualitaet/274019/stationen-der-ehe-fuer-alle-in-deutschland>). Accessed: 26 February 2021.

⁴⁸ Cf. Antidiskriminierungsstelle des Bundes (not dated). Frau – Mann - Divers: Die „Dritte Option“ und das Allgemeine Gleichbehandlungsgesetz. (https://www.antidiskriminierungsstelle.de/DE/ThemenUndForschung/Geschlecht/Dritte_Option/Dritte_Option_node.html). Accessed: 26 February 2021.

	<p>have the right to donate blood, join the military and LGBTQ+ discrimination is illegal to some extent.⁴⁹</p> <p>However, LGBTQ+ rights are facing a backlash in Poland today. Ever since the Law and Justice Party (PiS) took over government, an increasingly hostile attitude towards-LGTBQ+ people has been promoted by political authorities. As the organisation Human Rights Watch stated: “Senior party members have historically misrepresented efforts to advance gender equality and end discrimination as attacks on “traditional” family values and used such arguments to undermine women’s and LGBT rights groups.”⁵⁰ During campaigning for the last elections in Poland, anti LGBTQ+ rhetoric was even used as strategy.</p> <p>Lately, these developments have caused increasing concern for the European Union and NGOs fighting for human rights and equality. The European Commission worded its concerns as follows:</p> <p>““By targeting its own people and denying their basic rights, the government is flouting the principles of tolerance and nondiscrimination Poland committed to when it joined the EU,” Knight said. “Perpetuating the falsehood that LGBT rights threaten Polish society doesn’t protect anyone – it only feeds dangerous intolerance for which all of Poland pays the price.”⁵¹</p> <p>According to the Report of the Ombudsman ⁵², Poland currently ranks 39th out of 49 countries in the annual review of the legal protection provided to LGBT persons in European countries prepared by ILGA Europe (organisation for LGBTI equality and human rights in Europe and Central Asia). According to the ranking, the highest scores in Poland are for the status of observance of the freedom of association, and for years the lowest scored is protection against hate crimes and discrimination, and respect for the right to family life.</p> <p>In Poland, violations of the right to private and family life result mainly from the failure to regulate the legal situation of families created by same-sex couples. There is no institutionalisation of civil unions, no regulations defining the legal situation of children born abroad, whose birth certificates indicate same-sex parents and no provisions specifying the gender reconciliation procedure (the Act</p>
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⁴⁹ Cf. Equaldex (2021): LGBT Rights in Poland (<https://www.equaldex.com/region/poland>). Accessed 16 March 2021.

⁵⁰ Human Rights Watch (2020): Poland: Crackdown On LGBT Activists (<https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/08/07/poland-crackdown-lgbt-activists>). Accessed: 16 March 2021.

⁵¹ Human Rights Watch (2020)

⁵² Bodnar, Adam (2019): Rzecznik Praw Obywatelskich: Prawa osób LGBT w Polsce. Raporty RPO na sesji 16 III KPO, Warszawa.

	<p>on Gender Reconciliation adopted in 2015 by the Sejm was vetoed by the President). In these areas, Poland remains far from meeting the international standard established by the case law of the European Court of Human Rights.</p> <p>The Ombudsman's Office receives complaints related to long-lasting and violating the dignity of transgender persons proceedings on gender reconciliation, problems that transgender minors have to deal with in everyday life, including difficulties with the administrative change of name, discrimination at school, as well as complaints from citizens living in relationships with persons of the same sex, whose families are in no way protected and recognised by Polish law.⁵³</p>
Croatia	<p>Sexual activity between persons of the same sex has been legal in Croatia since 1977.</p> <p>The status of same-sex relationships was first officially recognised in 2003 when the law on unregistered cohabitation came into force.</p> <p>As a result of a referendum held in 2013, the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia defines marriage as a union of a man and a woman, which gave effect to the prohibition of same-sex marriage.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the 2014 Life Partnership Act gave same-sex couples the same rights as male-female couples, except for the possibility of adopting children. However, there are laws that allow individual adoption in which one of the partners adopts a child, and partner care by which, in the event of the death of a life partner, the care of the child is taken over by the other life partner.</p> <p>In Croatia, all forms of discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity are prohibited by law.⁵⁴</p>

Regarding the terms homophobia and transphobia (as well as biphobia and interphobia), it is often argued that these terms are problematic as the suffix -phobia generally suggests an irrational fear, whereas the terms actually refer to attitudes that range from dislike to abhorrence of and violence against homosexual⁵⁵ and trans people (or bisexual and intersex people). Similar to the term xenophobia (see Module 1 and Module 3), homophobic and/or transphobic people are placed in the victim's

⁵³ Halo.Radio, Podcast (2019): III Kongres Praw Obywatelskich // "Prawa osób LGBT w Polsce" (<https://pod.co/haloradio/iii-kongres-praw-obywatelskich-prawa-osb-lgbt-w-polsce>). Accessed: 20 January 2021.

⁵⁴ Iori.hr (2010): Prava LGBTIQ osoba u Hrvatskoj. (<http://www.iori.hr/hr/prava-lgbt-osoba/prava-lgbtqi-osoba-u-hrvatskoj>). Accessed: 26 February 2021.

⁵⁵ Cf. Anderson (2011).

role. For this reason, the psychologist Gregory M. Herek proposes to use the phrases “sexual stigma” or “sexual prejudice”.⁵⁶ These terms focus on sexual orientation and therefore exclude hostility on the grounds of gender identity, thus excluding hostility against trans, intersex or (gender-)queer people. Another idea would be to use the word heterosexism for any resentment, hatred, or unequal treatment towards and of people that are not heterosexual and cisgender (see info box on p. 2). This term suggests that the reason for this phenomenon is not (primarily) hatred or fear, but the belief that being cisgender and heterosexual are the norm and thus superior. Also, it builds the bridge to the concept of sexism.

Exercise: Tedx Talk – Paula Stone Williams (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrYx7HaUIMY>)

Watch the Tedx Talk with Paula Stone Williams and answer the following questions:

- Can you identify situations where Paula Stone Williams was affected by sexism and/or transphobia? Note them down.
- Name some examples of gender inequality and male privilege that she gives.
- Are there any notions that you do not understand? Write them down and try to find their meaning in the text above, in the glossary or online.
- “I just didn’t know what I didn’t know” (4:42-4:45)

Think about this statement. Considering the video you just watched, would you apply this statement also to yourself? Why or why not?

6. GOING BEYOND: WHAT IS TOXIC MASCULINITY?

“By far the worst thing we do to males – by making them feel they have to be hard – is that we leave them with very fragile egos.”

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2014): “We should all be feminists”

Exercise: Gillette advertisement (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=koPmuEyP3a0>)

Watch the spot “We Believe: The Best Men Can Be” | Gillette (Short Film) and answer the following questions:

- What types of masculinity are shown in the video?
- What could the term “toxic masculinity” mean?
- Think of one to three examples from your own experiences (in school or elsewhere).

⁵⁶ Cf. Harrington, Rebecca (2015): There's a growing movement to stop using the word 'homophobic'. (<https://www.businessinsider.com/an-argument-against-the-word-homophobic-2015-9?r=DE&IR=T>). Accessed: 20 August 2020.

When addressing sexism in education, our focus tends to be automatically on women and girls as they are primarily discriminated by it. This approach risks labelling the subject as a mere “women’s problem” without examining the concepts of masculinity that form the power dynamics of gender inequality.⁵⁷

A key factor in understanding the phenomenon of sexism lies therefore in exposing the concept of masculinity that is socially and culturally accepted, desired and encouraged. Scholars also suggest that the predominance of this certain type of “toxic” masculinity might help to understand the motives for homophobia, hate crimes and sexual assaults.

But what is toxic masculinity? Toxic masculinity refers to a (self-) destructive behaviour that is based on a very narrow form of masculinity and is without any problem awareness mainly centered around power, violence, sexual conquest, status, aggression and control. It explicitly does not mean that masculinity is per se toxic or that men and boys are a fundamental problem. It means that everyone has a problem when men and boys think that they can only perform their masculinity in these domains.⁵⁸

Critical masculinity studies therefore scientifically analyse these problematic concepts of masculinity and its consequences and aim to establish a more nuanced and inclusive image of masculinity. In recent years, gender-sensitive approaches for educating boys have been established as an equivalent to already existing offers for girls. By learning alternative patterns of behaviour, language and role models, boys experience that masculinity can be expressed in very different ways. Like this, structures of toxic masculinity that are deeply rooted in the societies we live in can be dismantled and overcome. Also, regarding the radicalisation process in the case of right-wing extremism, it can be stated that particularly men are susceptible to right-wing extremist ideas because, on the one hand, they transport masculine hegemonic claims and, on the other hand, they compensate experiences of perceived marginalisation. Therefore, these educational approaches can also be seen as indirect prevention measures targeting the radicalisation of male youths regarding right-wing extremism.⁵⁹

7. SEXISM AND ANTI-FEMINISM AS A PROBLEM FOR DEMOCRACIES AND STRATEGY OF RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM

The term anti-feminism subsumes all agents, groups, or ideologies, organised or not, that reject the idea of gender equality and the diversity of sex, gender and familial settings. These agendas often arise

⁵⁷ Cf. Elliott, Kathleen (2018): Challenging toxic masculinity in schools and society. In: On the Horizon, Vol. 26. No. 1, pp. 17-22, p. 18. (<https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/OTH-11-2017-0088/full/pdf?title=challenging-toxic-masculinity-in-schools-and-society>). Accessed: 25 August 2020.

⁵⁸ Cf. Pickert, Nils (2019): Toxische Männlichkeit: Gibt es auch eine vergiftete Weiblichkeit? In: Der Standard. (<https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000106924233/toxische-maennlichkeit-gibt-es-auch-eine-vergiftete-weiblichkeit>). Accessed: 25 August 2020.

⁵⁹ Cf. Möller, Kurt (2010): Männlichkeitsforschung im Rahmen von Rechtsextremismusstudien. Ausgangspunkte, Ansätze, Ergebnisse und Perspektiven. In: Claus, Robert/Lehnert, Esther/Müller, Yves (eds.): Was ein rechter Mann ist: Männlichkeiten im Rechtsextremismus. Berlin: Karl Dietz Verlag, pp. 25-38. (https://www.ro-salux.de/fileadmin/rls_uploads/pdfs/Publ-Texte/Texte_68.pdf). Accessed: 05 October 2020.

as counter-reactions to women's and LGBTIQ+'s emancipation movements⁶⁰ and propagate the idea that men are facing an existential threat. Depending on the political spectrum, anti-feminism is justified on religious, political or even scientific grounds, whereby the associated references to the divine, popular or secular order, history, tradition and science as well as biology can seldom be clearly separated from one another, but are rather strongly interwoven.⁶¹ To summarise, anti-feminism can be described as an attitude and behavioural pattern against the feminist movement and its already achieved goals. Anti-feminists are therefore against one of the most important features of democracy, against the principle of equality, and can be described as antidemocratic.⁶²

Anti-feminist mobilisations have, for example, been directed against the legal introduction of same-sex marriage, sex education, gender studies and movements that advocate for the safe, free and legal access to abortion.⁶³ These agendas are also an important column in right-wing extremist and right-wing populist parties, like AfD in Germany, FPÖ in Austria, and DPMŠ, HKS and HSP in Croatia. An example for the anti-feminist agenda of DPMŠ in Croatia is their stance on abortion, as the party leader Miroslav Škoro voiced in a video debate leading up to the elections in summer 2020. According to Škoro, abortion is something to be viewed as hostile interference with the way of life and women should not be allowed to make decisions about unborn children. He went as far as proclaiming that, even women, who got pregnant during rape, should have to seek their family's approval for abortion.⁶⁴ How anti-feminist agendas contradict with democratic values even more in Croatia can be seen when looking at the movement called "Walk for Life" (Hod za život), that claims to be "pro-life" and repeatedly organises rallies to demonstrate against abortion rights. Polish right-wing and populist parties like Korwin, Konfederacja or even ruling at the moment PIS have anti-feminist agendas. How far-reaching anti-feminist agendas in Poland are and the anti-democratic aspect of its laws on abortion is shown by its latest newly introduced law on abortion. A "ruling of 22 October [2020] by Poland's Constitutional Tribunal to make abortion illegal [even] in cases involving severe and irreversible foetal defects"⁶⁵ caused not only women's rights defenders in the country to be concerned, but the European Parliament to get involved, as they perceived this bill to lead to "women's fundamental human rights [to be] no longer guaranteed"^{66, 67}

⁶⁰ Cf. Lang, Juliane (2020): Themenflyer Antifeminismus. (https://mbt-niedersachsen.de/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/antifeminismus_themenflyer-1.pdf). Accessed: 25 August 2020.

⁶¹ Cf. Goetz, Judith/Mayer, Stefanie (2019): Mit Gott und Natur gegen geschlechterpolitischen Wandel: Ideologie und Rhetoriken des rechten Antifeminismus. In: FIPU: Rechtsextremismus: Band 3: Geschlechterreflektierte Perspektive. Wien, Berlin: mandelbaum kritik & utopie, p. 221.

⁶² Cf. Rahner, Judith (2018): Antifeminismus als Demokratiegefährdung?! Gleichstellung in Zeiten von Rechtspopulismus. (https://www.frauenbeauftragte.org/sites/default/files/uploads/downloads/antifeminismus_als_demokratiegefahrdung.pdf) Accessed: 05 October 2020.

⁶³ Cf. Lang (2020).

⁶⁴ Cf. BalkanInsight (2020): Election Campaigners' Attacks on Abortion Draw Condemnation in Croatia (<https://balkaninsight.com/2020/06/18/election-campaigners-attacks-on-abortion-draw-condemnation-in-croatia/>). Accessed: 13.03.2021

⁶⁵ European Parliament (2020): Polish de facto ban on abortion puts women's lives at risk, says Parliament. (<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20201120IPR92132/polish-de-facto-ban-on-abortion-puts-women-s-lives-at-risk-says-parliament>). Accessed: 13 March 2021.

⁶⁶ European Parliament (2020).

⁶⁷ Cf. European Parliament (2020).

But anti-feminists are not only active on the national level, they are also well connected on an international scale. As right-wing extremism employs ideologies of inequality like sexism and anti-feminism to maintain reactionary and traditional gender roles, there are many organisational and personnel cross-connections. Anti-feminism may also operate as a gateway to right-wing extremism⁶⁸ and vice versa right-wing extremists might use anti-feminist discourses as a link to traditional conservative stances of the so-called centre of society.⁶⁹ For example, “the AfD constructs a line of conflict between the ‘pure people’, on the one hand, and gender ideology and the other parties, on the other. Ultimately, the AfD positions itself in this field of conflict on the side of the ‘people’, as a fighter for the survival of the German people and for their supposedly natural understanding of gender and sexuality, ideally represented by the normative family.”⁷⁰ Across ideological boundaries, anti-feminism has the potential to connect the “middle” with the right margin and must therefore be taken seriously, otherwise it represents a threat to equality and thus a danger to democracy.⁷¹

The most striking overlap between anti-feminist agenda and right-wing extremism can be seen in the so-called manifestos of white supremacist shooters. Already several white supremacist shooters referred to a conspiracy theory which warns “that nonwhites are having more children than whites, and that the resulting demographic change threatens European culture.”⁷² The worldview of these men is a conglomerate of racist, anti-Semitic and anti-feminist conspiracy narratives. Ideologies of inequality like sexism (or anti-feminism), homophobia and anti-Semitism are therefore important components in the mindsets of right-wing extremist or white-supremacist shooters with which they justify their violence and killings. Scholars found out that the attackers of the Halle synagogue shooting on 9th October 2019, the Christchurch mosque shootings on 15th March 2019 and the Toronto van attack on 23rd April 2018 were all also strongly motivated by misogyny.⁷³ These attacks are sad proof of the fact that ideologies of inequality are not only a theoretical danger for our democracies but that they also have an extremely high potential for violence.

If you want to learn more about the connections between right-wing extremism and conspiracy narratives, take a look at **Module 7** which deals with “Right-wing Extremism, Hate Speech, Fake News & Conspiracy Theories”.

⁶⁸ Cf. de Boise, Sam (2019): Editorial: is masculinity toxic? In: International Journal for Masculinity Studies, Vol. 14, No. 3, pp. 147-151. (<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/18902138.2019.1654742>). Accessed: 25 August 2020.

⁶⁹ Cf. Lang (2020).

⁷⁰ Berg, Lynn (2017): Between Anti-Feminism and Ethnicized Sexism. In: Frömming, Urte Undine, Steffen Köhn, Samantha Fox, and Mike Terry, eds. Digital Environments: Ethnographic Perspectives Across Global Online and Offline Spaces. Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2017, pp. 83-84.

⁷¹ Cf. Unmüßig, Barbara/van Bargaen, Henning (2016): Antifeminismus – Scharnier zwischen rechtem Rand und Mitte (<https://www.gwi-boell.de/de/2016/09/28/antifeminismus-scharnier-zwischen-rechtem-rand-und-mitte>). Accessed: 05.10.2020.

⁷² Cf. Lewis, Helen (2019): To Learn About the Far Right, Start With the ‘Manosphere’. (<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2019/08/anti-feminism-gateway-far-right/595642/>). Accessed: 25 August 2020.

⁷³ Cf. Bongen, Robert/Schiele, Katharina (2019): Rechtsextremismus. Feminismus als Feindbild. (<https://www.tagesschau.de/investigativ/panorama/frauenhass-rechtsextremismus-101.html>). Accessed: 18 November 2011.

8. EXERCISES YOU CAN USE WHEN TEACHING ABOUT SEXISM

1.) Watch the video “Be a lady they said” in class (<https://vimeo.com/393253445>).

Let your pupils answer the following questions: What is the message of the video? Who is the target group? Look at the comment section of the video and discuss individual comments. Encourage your pupils to elaborate their own comments.

2.) Listen to the song „Queere Tiere“ (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1zaKaP6i4o>) by German rapper Sookee in class. What is the message of the song?

3) Brainstorming: as teachers in this reddit forum (https://www.reddit.com/r/AskFeminists/comments/i9pg5m/how_do_i_explain_feminism_to_a_bunch_of_14yearold/) discuss, sexism in classes is a common occurrence and somewhat difficult to deal with. As one of the teachers suggests: **Stimulate an open debate by directing the following brainstorming questions to your pupils.**

- What expectations do we place on women/girls? What expectations do we place on boys/men?
- What does the ideal women look like? What does the ideal man look like?
- What would you consider female behaviours and what would you consider male behaviours?

The goal is for pupils to realise how confining gender roles are and how many of us possess traits that fall into both the “male box” and the “female box”.

4.) For more exercise material in German language visit <https://www.poika.at/publikationen/>

9. WHERE TO TURN TO? NGOs & NETWORKS THAT CAN HELP YOU LEARN MORE

Austria:

- abz*austria: Non-Profit organization for gender equality in the labour market (<https://www.abzaustria.at/>)
- EfEU: Association for the Development of Feminist Educational and Teaching Models (<https://www.efeu.or.at/verein.html>)
- Mädchenzentrum Klagenfurt: Center of expertise for the education of girls (<https://www.maedchenzentrum.at/>)
- Poika: Association that promotes and advocates the gender-sensitive education of boys (<https://www.poika.at/willkommen/>)
- Homosexuelle Initiative Wien (<https://www.hosiwien.at>)
- Courage* Beratungsstelle (https://www.courage-beratung.at/ueber_uns)

- Männerberatung (<https://www.maenner.at/beratung/lgbtiq-beratung/>)
- RosaLilaPantherInnen Graz ([RosaLila PantherInnen - \(homo.at\)](https://www.rosalilapantherinnen.at/))
- Verein Ausgesprochen LGBTIQ* Lehrer*innen ([Ausgesprochen! LGBTIQ* Lehrer*innen - Ausgesprochen \(verein-ausgesprochen.at\)](https://www.ausgesprochen.at/))

Germany:

- Pinkstinks (<https://pinkstinks.de/>)
- LSVD: Lesben- und Schwulenverband Deutschland (<https://www.lsvd.de/de/>)
- Queeramnesty (<https://www.queeramnesty.de/>)

Poland:

- Fundacja Trans-Fuzja (<https://www.transfuzja.org>)
- Fundacja Równości (<https://rownosc.org.pl>)
- Kampania Przeciw Homofobii (<http://www.kph.org.pl/>)
- Stowarzyszenie Lambda (<http://lambdawarszawa.org/>)
- Stowarzyszenie Na Rzecz Lesbijek, Gejów, Osób Biseksualnych, Osób Transpłciowych Oraz Osób Queer "Pracownia Różnorodności" (<http://www.spr.org.pl/>)
- Centrum Praw Kobiet (<http://www.cpk.org.pl/>)
- Demokratyczna Unia Kobiet (<http://www.dukrk.pl/news.php>)
- Federacja na Rzecz Kobiet i Planowania Rodziny (<http://www.federa.org.pl/>)
- Fundacja Feminoteka (<http://www.feminoteka.pl/news.php>)
- Towarzystwo Edukacji Antydyksryminacyjnej (<http://www.tea.org.pl>)

Croatia:

- Udruuga Lori (<https://www.lori.hr/>)
- PARiTER (<https://pariter.hr/>)
- Dugine obitelji (<https://www.dugineobitelji.com/>)
- BaBe (<https://babe.hr/>)
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