
Examining the Gender Pay Gap

Segment Length: 5:57 minutes; 5:36 minutes

Videos:

“Is the Gender Pay Gap Real?”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=it0EYBBI5LI>

“SITC 2015 War on Women”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-aBFGeRWyq4>

Guide:

The questions below will help students achieve a better understanding of the arguments made on either side of a contentious topic. Because these questions often touch upon statements made briefly in the videos, we recommend reading the questions before watching each video.

Students are encouraged to take notes during the videos, and it may be helpful for students to break into groups, each taking responsibility for only a few questions, before coming together for discussion.

Analysis Questions:

1. Amy Holmes tells John Stossel that the wage gap between men and women starts small and widens over time. How does her explanation of why this occurs differ from John Green's?
2. John Green notes that men are disproportionately advanced to supervisory roles. Based on John Stossel's comments in the second clip, how do you think Stossel would explain this phenomenon?
3. Both videos say that, when controlling for education, occupation, etc., the gender wage gap shrinks to less than 10%. Why might it make sense that discrimination could be causing this gap? What alternative explanations might Amy Holmes propose?
4. John Green says race and gender affect people long before they enter the workforce. What does he mean? How could this make it difficult to disentangle the causes of gender (and racial) disparities?
5. Some of the factors causing women to earn less than men are caused by choice of college major, occupation, etc. John Green says social constructions of gender and expectations play a role in these choices. What's his argument? How does Amy Holmes respond?
6. John Green cites a 2007 study which found that female applicants with children receive fewer job offers and lower salaries while men fair better after having children in terms of

employment opportunities and wages. How could discrimination explain this? What's an alternative explanation?

7. Amy Holmes hypothesizes that urban knowledge economies explain why women earn 8% more than men in 147 of the 150 largest U.S. cities. Why would a knowledge economy produce better results for women?