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very toxic ones.

**S.Z.:** *There is a "rebranding of feminism" happening. Waves of feminism. What does "fourth-wave feminism" look like?*

**A.Z.:** I don't subscribe to the "wave" metaphor. I just don't like it because the idea of waves sort of ends up looking like one wave crashes down and wipes out the wave before it, and that's not how it should be. It should be more of a building metaphor, the waves – generationally, chronologically – they should build on one and another.

We're talking about the same issues: equal pay, work-life balance, about sexuality. All of these things are identical. The only difference is there is a slightly different framework.

There is always an urge with feminists to separate yourself from what came before, and so when Bitch first started, third-wave feminism was having its sort of growing-pain struggle and pop culture had a lot to do with that. Second-wave feminists thought, "Why do you care about pop culture, why does that matter?" And third-wave feminists were saying, "Well it matters, and if you can't see that, we don't want to have anything to do with you."

My sense is that we are still in this together. Many of the women who were (involved in the movement then), are still really active. I admire that immensely because this is exhausting work and it can really burn you out.

**S.Z.:** *This next generation of feminists, and really the whole feminist movement now has social media...*

**A.Z.:** That's huge. The things that feminism has been able to accomplish via social media is incredible. When people complain that the younger feminists don't care about feminism, all you have to do, really, is point them to Twitter. And I think they might want to recheck their facts, because (young feminists) really do care and they are doing something.

**S.Z.:** *Have you been following the #YesAllWomen hashtag?*

**A.Z.:** #YesAllWomen came out of the shooting on campus at Santa Barbara by this young, privileged, disturbed man who was essentially blaming women for not giving him the attention and the sex that he felt he was owed by being reasonably handsome and rich.

It's very weird that we live in a political climate where the first reaction to an event like this by a critical mass of men is, "Well, I don't do that, so therefore it's not as big a deal. This isn't an endemic issue, this is about this one dude."

Feminists are saying, "No. We're living this. It's not just about this one guy. It's about a larger culture that really believes that men are entitled to women and their bodies and their attention." It escalates via social media, but it is a dynamic that has been going on forever.

**S.Z.:** *You might not pull out a gun and shoot me because you are frustrated. Then again, you might. Or you might do something else to subdue or demean women ...*

**A.Z.:** Yeah. Right. It's one of those things, things like this #NotAllMen, #YesAllWomen they're are simultaneously exhilarating and frustrating. At the time, they seem really vital and needed, but as time goes on, you realize how many people don't get it. And how the ignorance ends up taking precedence over the voices of the people who do get it and who do want a change.

**S.Z.:** *Jill Abramson, the former executive editor of the New York Times and the first woman to hold that position, was fired in*

*May. There was much discussion in the media about her discovery weeks before her dismissal that she was paid less in wages and pension than her male predecessors. The word "pushy" was also used by management at the Times – a characterization that has a gendered aspect to say the least.*

**A.Z.:** I wrote a piece about this for the Bitch site. It was about why her firing matters. It speaks to the whole "lean in" philosophy that people have really embraced over the past couple of years, this idea that the COO of Facebook (Sheryl Sandberg) wrote this book about women "leaning in" and how they shouldn't pull away from work. As though they were. I'm not sure why she felt the need to write this book, but it was basically a guide for women at work. It spoke specifically to white women in high paying corporate jobs. So when it came out, a lot of the thinking was this doesn't speak to the majority of women.

When Jill Abramson was fired, my first thought was, "This sums up the problems with the whole "lean in" philosophy." Because "lean in" presupposes a kind of trickle down feminism where if women at the top have it easier, it will eventually make it so that women in minimum wage jobs or undocumented women. It presupposes that all of these things will get better if women at the very top, in elite professions, change the culture.

Jill Abramson's firing really reiterated the idea that things aren't changing – even at the top. It is literally the same dynamic. If the first female executive editor of the New York Times can't get equal treatment, what hope does anyone else have? She didn't feel comfortable. She spoke up. She was punished for it. And not only was she punished, she was punished using the same language that has been used to demean and browbeat women all through history.

It's depressing and I think it really does point out that "leaning in" only works if you are already in a pretty golden seat.

**S.Z.:** *And even then ... does anyone really think that any editor – no offense – is not "pushy" regardless of their gender?*

**A.Z.:** You sort of have to be.

**S.Z.:** *Right. Like do people think, "That man is being really pushy in the way he's talking to his employees?" and then, "Well, he's a man, men are like that."*

**A.Z.:** I was really encouraged to see a couple of male editors on Twitter saying, "Yeah, she's pushy and that is exactly what she should be." If that's a problem for management, then that's their problem.

**S.Z.:** *Last month, Reynolds High School in Troutdale became the 74th school shooting since the Newtown shootings in December 2012. That is just shy of a shooting a week. What are your thoughts on gun violence, mass shootings and gender?*

**A.Z.:** I'm really angry. I am so angry that it has become such a partisan issue that it can't even be talked about. Certainly there is a pattern to these shootings and the pattern has to do with – I forget what writer coined this term – aggrieved entitlement among men. White men mostly feeling like the world is against them. That the natural order has somehow been violated by women becoming educated and empowered and able to speak up for themselves and be their own people.

If you look at the campus shootings over the last 10 years or so, many have been motivated by a form of sexism. It's really frustrating that the media, every time it happens refuses to engage with the idea that there is sexism going on and that there is a gendered reason for these shootings. The shooter in Isla Vista (Calif.) was the product of a very sexist society that had taught him a lot of untrue, but very common

myths about masculinity and what it means to be a successful, sexual male. ... My son is five. He is going to start public school next year. It is terrifying to think that the statistics are against him. I feel like they're against all of us.

**S.Z.:** *Advertising and beauty culture? How do we survive it?*

**A.Z.:** Media literacy. The more ads and the more imperatives that exist and the more products exist, the more widely disseminated push-back there is – often by the same people who are creating the products to begin with.

Dove is an incredible example of that. Dove makes beauty products. They are owned by Unilever which makes all kinds of beauty products worldwide, but they also do these campaigns that demystify things like photoshopping and the number of ads that young girls see in the span of a day, or toxic, self inflicted body image issues. They put those out, but at the same time, they are sort of responsible for creating them. It's a really tricky thing that they're doing. It has to do with the idea that as a company, their mandate is not to make more women feel better about themselves, it's to make money. They are realizing that one way to get women to spend money is to make them feel good about themselves.

Realizing that beauty culture is a construction can be helpful. But it's also important to realize that buying into it doesn't mean buying into it hook, line and sinker. You can enjoy makeup. You can enjoy looking how you like to look, but not feel like you're alone. Everyone is affected by it and no one is immune to it.

**S.Z.:** *How has motherhood affected your politics, ideas or feelings about feminism, if at all?*

**A.Z.:** I've always been pro-choice. I am, seriously, 500 percent more pro-choice since becoming a mother. Because being a parent is so hard.

This sort of right-wing notion that women go into abortions sort of willy nilly is nuts to me. I've never had one, but I know many, many people who have. None of them have taken it lightly. Even if it was an easy decision to make, based on circumstances, no one took it lightly.

If you want to be a mother, you absolutely should have that choice and if you don't (want to be a mother), you absolutely should have that choice.

In other ways I feel strongly about teaching kids media literacy. It is such a crucial time. It's a cliché that little kids are like sponges, but they are. They absolutely are.

As young as three they are picking up on the idea that things are gendered and their teaching that to each other. My son really wants to like that movie, "Frozen," but he feels like he can't because there are these sort of gatekeepers at his school who are like, "Princesses are for girls. That's a girl movie." They don't know the extent of what they're doing, but they're doing it because the media is giving them those messages. It's just automatic.

**The challenges to women's reproductive justice and bodily autonomy is a global issue. It affects education, it affects economies, it affects a million little things that people don't recognize when they see it as simply "her problem" or "a women's issue." It is crucial to have everybody, not just women, in the fight for women's reproductive justice, on all levels. That's definitely something that this case has underscored.**