

# He for she - Emma Watson's UN speech

Listen to UN Women Goodwill Ambassador Emma Watson at a special event for the HeForShe campaign, United Nations Headquarters, New York, 20 September 2014.

## Complete the missing words.

Today, we 1.\_\_\_\_\_ a campaign called "He For She." I am reaching out to you because we need 2.\_\_\_\_\_. We want to end gender inequality, and to do this, we need everyone involved. This is the first campaign of its kind at the UN: we want to try and galvanize as many men and boys as possible to be advocates for gender equality. And we don't just want to talk about it, but make sure it is tangible. The more I 3.\_\_\_\_\_ about feminism, the more I 4.\_\_\_\_\_ that fighting for women's rights has too often 5.\_\_\_\_\_ synonymous with man hating. If there is one thing I know for certain, it is that this has to stop. For the record, feminism, by definition, is the 6.\_\_\_\_\_ that men and women 7.\_\_\_\_\_ equal rights and opportunities.



## Order the phrases according to the speech.

I started questioning gender-based assumptions a long time ago.

But the boys were not.

because they didn't want to appear muscly.

I decided that I was a feminist.

But my recent research has shown me that feminism has become an unpopular word.

Women are choosing not to identify as feminists.

When I was eight, I was confused at being called bossy because I wanted to direct the plays that we would put on for our parents.

When at fifteen, my girlfriends started dropping out of their beloved sports teams.

## Match the beginning of the sentence with the ending.

But sadly, I can say that there is no one country in the world

because my parents didn't love me less because I was born a daughter.

I think it is right that women be involved

where all women can expect to receive these rights.

My school did not limit me because I was a girl,

my mentors didn't assume that I would go less far because I might give birth to a child one day.

Why has the word become such an uncomfortable one?

on my behalf in the policies and the decisions that affect my life.

They may not know it,

I think it is right that I should be able to make decisions about my own body.

My life is as sheer privilege,

, but they are the inadvertent feminists who are changing the world today. We need more of those.



## Read the last section of the speech. Fill in the blanks.

And if you still hate the word—it is not the word that is important but the idea and the ambition behind it. Because not all women have been afforded the same rights that I have. In fact, statistically, very few 1.\_\_\_\_\_.

In 1995, Hilary Clinton made a 2.\_\_\_\_\_ in Beijing about women's rights. Sadly many of the things she 3.\_\_\_\_\_ are still a reality today.

But what stood out for me the most was that only 30 per cent of her audience were male. How 4.\_\_\_\_\_ change in the world when only half of it is invited or 5.\_\_\_\_\_ to participate in the conversation?

Men—I 6.\_\_\_\_\_ this opportunity to extend your formal invitation. 7.\_\_\_\_\_ is your issue too. Because to date, I 8.\_\_\_\_\_ my father's role as a parent being valued less by society despite my needing his presence as a child as much as my mother's.

I've seen young men suffering from mental illness unable to ask for help for fear it 9.\_\_\_\_\_ them look less "macho"—in fact in the UK suicide is 10.\_\_\_\_\_ killer of men between 20–49 years of age; eclipsing road accidents, cancer and coronary heart disease. I've seen men made 11.\_\_\_\_\_ by a distorted sense of what constitutes male success. Men 12.\_\_\_\_\_ the benefits of equality either.

We 13.\_\_\_\_\_ about men being imprisoned by gender stereotypes but I can see that that they are and that when they are free, things 14.\_\_\_\_\_ for women as a natural consequence.

## Read the last section of the speech.

If men don't have to be aggressive in order to be accepted, women won't feel compelled to be submissive. If men don't have to control, women won't have to be controlled. Both men and women should feel free to be sensitive.



Both men and women should feel free to be strong. It is time that we all perceive gender on a spectrum, instead of two sets of opposing ideals. If we stop defining each other by what we are not, and start defining ourselves by who we are, we can all be freer, and this is what HeForShe is about. It's about freedom.

I want men to take up this mantle so that their daughters, sisters, and mothers can be free from prejudice, but also so that their sons have permission to be vulnerable and human too, reclaim those parts of themselves they abandoned, and in doing so, be a more true and complete version of themselves.

You might be thinking, "Who is this Harry Potter girl, and what is she doing speaking at the UN?" And, it's a really good question. I've been asking myself the same thing.

All I know is that I care about this problem, and I want to make it better. And, having seen what I've seen, and given the chance, I feel it is my responsibility to say something.

Statesman Edmund Burke said, "All that is needed for the forces of evil to triumph is for good men and women to do nothing."

In my nervousness for this speech and in my moments of doubt, I told myself firmly, "If not me, who? If not now, when?" If you have similar doubts when opportunities are presented to you, I hope those words will be helpful. Because the reality is that if we do nothing, it will take seventy-five years, or for me to be nearly 100, before women can expect to be paid the same as men for the same work. 15.5 million girls will be married in the next 16 years as children. And at current rates, it won't be until 2086 before all rural African girls can have a secondary education.

If you believe in equality, you might be one of those inadvertent feminists that I spoke of earlier, and for this, I applaud you. We are struggling for a uniting word, but the good news is, we have a uniting movement. It is called HeForShe. I invite you to step forward, to be seen and to ask yourself, "If not me, who? If not now, when?"

Thank you very, very much

**Now, report one complete paragraph from the previous section. You can choose the paragraph you like the most. Use connectors and conjunctions to join the ideas in the paragraph. Be careful with punctuation and the tense shift in reported speech.**

