

# Scott Adams weighs in on the gender pay gap issue (or non-issue?)

31 upvotes | 20 March, 2015 | by InscrutablePUA

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<http://blog.dilbert.com/post/114055529676/my-verdict-on-gender-bias-in-the-workplace>

Generally a well researched and thought out piece on the gender pay gap issue. He comes to many of the same conclusions that we do here. Examples:

- Women who have equal experience as men are paid about three-quarters of what men earn. - FALSE
- Claim 4: Studies that adjust for equal experience on the same job show a gender pay gap in the 5-10% range. If gender bias exists, it would be in that number, and it would be a big deal.

Verdict: True. Studies that control for job type and experience still show a substantial and troubling difference in pay by gender. If the pay gap is based on bias, the evidence could be hidden in that number. And it would be a big deal.

(I find this verdict troubling as there are other factors in addition to job type and experience that could explain the difference, even statistical error.)

Claim 8 (Gender bias is a bigger problem for women than it is for men because we live in a patriarchy) is particularly interesting and worth a read. He pays homage to the feminists who waged war against the patriarchy to achieve almost-equal pay (predictably) then says that they need to pay more attention to reality and stop the dishonesty.

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## Comments

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Science\_isthenewcool • 14 points • 21 March, 2015 04:33 AM [\[recovered\]](#)

The prime reason that women and men have that 5-10% discrepancy is that men are more likely to pursue a pay rise and a promotion than women who generally avoid confrontation and expect their employer to recognize their hard work and reward them accordingly without asking for it. Men, if dissatisfied will either ask for a raise or move to another job.

max\_peenor • 10 points • 21 March, 2015 10:43 PM

I have been a hiring manager for over 25 years. I have had no women try to negotiate an offer. Not one. Zip. Never. At most, they may try to negotiate work conditions (work at home days, etc). I'd say about half of men do.

justtookit • 5 points • 21 March, 2015 02:13 PM

Don't forget men are probably more likely to negotiate salary at hiring time, and are probably better at it. If you can't negotiate for 5% more, are you really a good negotiator?

[deleted] • 1 point • 27 March, 2015 11:12 AM

Yeah. A 5% bump is almost a given if you just push a little.

RedBigMan • 5 points • 22 March, 2015 12:34 AM

Lets not forget the fact that men may be 5-10% more productive than women in the workplace because they spend 5-10% less time on water cooler gossip where they talk shit behind each others backs.

Corndog\_Enthusiast • 2 points • 22 March, 2015 12:48 AM

Yeah, reddit is where we get shit done.

But really, I'm convinced that your point is the truth, even though 75% of statistics are thought up on the spot.

RedBigMan • 1 point • 22 March, 2015 01:30 PM

Just like any gender studies/womyn's studies statistic.

Corndog\_Enthusiast • 2 points • 22 March, 2015 12:47 AM

Plus, pregnancy will take a toll on how much you earn, but it differs from job to job.

BlaiseDB • 6 points • 20 March, 2015 11:10 PM

Women in their 40s who are never married and never had children earn more than similarly situated men. I don't have the link handy but it was either Thomas Sowell or Warren Farrell. If I recall it was about 10% in favour of women.

Areimanes • 8 points • 20 March, 2015 11:28 PM

Dr. Thomas Sowell discusses this on The Firing Line back in the 1980s.

As someone else rightly pointed out, if women really did perform **equal** labor at 77 cents on the dollar... no company in their right mind would hire a man to do *any* job. Hell, even reducing overall labor costs a few

cents on the dollar would be a huge profit margin for a multinational

BlaiseDB • 3 points • 21 March, 2015 01:39 AM

Scott Adams's view is that credible studies that take into account various factor eliminate most of the wage gap but still leave 5% to 10% which, in his opinion, is not something that the market could readily discern nor act on, especially if that bias was unconscious.

nrjk • 0 points • 21 March, 2015 05:14 AM

Damn, I bet that old lady was soaked after he didn't budge an inch with her rambling anecdotes.

[deleted] • 16 points • 20 March, 2015 08:10 PM

[permanently deleted]

Zanford • 19 points • 20 March, 2015 08:47 PM

Yup. It wouldn't matter whether the difference were due to 'bias' or 'social programming' or whatever...if women were doing the same quality work for 5% less, you'd employ them. Scott Adams is wrong when he says capitalism couldn't be that precise....a 5% labor cost reduction is HUGE. Competing companies' profit margins are typically less than 5% apart.

He alludes to the theory of bias against women b/c employers know they are more likely to take a lot of time off or quit b/c of maternity. That may be true, but if it is, it's perfectly rational. If I went into a job interview and talked about how I might take a year off to backpack across Nepal soon, I should expect that to hurt my chances.

brannana • 5 points • 20 March, 2015 09:30 PM

if women were doing the same quality work for 5% less, you'd employ them.

Assuming, of course, that you were aware of your biases and intentionally paying women less.

There are a lot of data points I'd like to see analysed alongside just annual pay. What percentage of each gender entered salary negotiations upon entry to the job, and what increase in pay over the initial offer was asked vs accepted? How many pay increases/promotions did the person have after starting their position? What other benefits were negotiated (extra leave/flexible schedule, etc)

It could be something as simple as women are less likely to switch employers. Take two people who enter the job market at the same time. Ten years later, person A is still working for their first company, getting an average annual pay increase of 4%, factoring in CoLIs and promotions. Person B hops employers 4 times, negotiating a 10% increase every time they switch jobs, plus a 3% CoLI each year they stay at the same employer. After ten years, Person A and B would be making drastically different amounts of money, even if they were doing identical work.

But Adams makes a good point that the exaggeration of the facts does nothing to help the feminist argument.

niczar • 3 points • 21 March, 2015 01:54 PM

I tend to agree with you, but so many companies do weird stupid, counter-productive shit, you have no idea. I'm an IT consultant, and my biggest pet peeves is open floor plans. 90% of businesses do that shit.

"Hey let's hire a bunch of \$800/day contractors, but let's put them in wide open noisy uncomfortable open offices with dozens of chatty marketing cunts and noisy phone support operators. Sure they'll lose over 30% productivity, but we can save a few hundred bucks on rent! Also I have another great idea to save

on capex! Let's deny the request for new workstations, we don't want our Java programmers to code *too* fast, they might deliver a project on time! What's a few more weeks of consulting compared to spending a whole thousand dollars on a midrange PC!!!!"

Nah, I'm joking. They don't even realize how much their stupidity costs them.

Glenbert • 6 points • 20 March, 2015 10:45 PM

See claim #9 in the update.

And if you've ever hired someone, you already know that going for the cheapest candidate is usually a huge fucking mistake.

AnotherLostCause • 5 points • 20 March, 2015 10:59 PM

It is interesting, women claim they only get paid 77% of what men are paid. Fact women who are doctors in the UK work 20 to 25% less than their male counterparts. Funny how those numbers coincide.

rporion • 0 points • 20 March, 2015 08:49 PM

Oh, you and your economics 101...

[deleted] • 5 points • 20 March, 2015 09:01 PM

Perfect information is assumed in economics 101..

rporion • 0 points • 20 March, 2015 09:39 PM

Alright, but to discover that women work for cheap, if it were indeed so, would not be an information that is hard to find, it being shouted from the mountaintops and all.

I am just waiting for the day where feminists use their superior insights to make a killing.

charcoales • 8 points • 20 March, 2015 07:22 PM

I don't take one side of this issue based purely on opinion. If there was direct evidence showing discrimination I think that should be corrected. However, if the evidence is lacking and poorly done then is there actually an issue to discuss? We can tear apart the issue from every philosophical point of view, but at the end of the day evidence-based decisions are often the fairest.

The hitch comes from when the evidence is poor on either side of the issue and people start to bring in their philosophical views which don't contribute to an evidence-based answer. Maybe they should start funding well-designed and peer-reviewed studies to settle this issue once and for all.

Glenbert • 3 points • 20 March, 2015 10:49 PM

Most people are innumerate. You throw numbers at them and they think it's science. I guarantee you that you could go out tonight and convince people that 68% of women are fired within 10 days of being hired and several people would believe it.

bigcitytruth • 3 points • 22 March, 2015 03:40 AM\*

One thing people rarely talk about: Hiring managers and human resources staff in corporate America are something around 3/4 female. These women are the people who make most of the pay and staffing decisions! It pretty much proves the "gap" in pay is based on the simple fact that 1) women don't ask for high pay or promotions and 2) women work fewer hours. It's so simple it's silly. In fact, now the wage gap for millennials is 93/100 according to Pew Research ( [Link](#) ). Now that's not including the factors of women preferring lower-

paying professions, and taking more time off work for travel and family. At that point, you're even closer to parity, probably more in line to be 95/100.

So why is it not at 100% parity? Back to the Human Resources point -- A dominant man can bowl over a female HR rep with his demand for a raise using confidence, and tried-and-true techniques (see 48 laws of power). A woman can't easily ask for a promotion from another woman, because her pussy powers won't work against the other woman's bitch shield, and women tend to naturally dislike conflict and risk. Boom -- that's where the remaining 5% of pay went.

nrjk • 5 points • 21 March, 2015 05:21 AM

I've made the joke before:

If women have been kept out of math all these years, then why would I ever listen to a group of women who wants to provide a statistical analysis of, well, anything involving mathematics.

If I want a critique and analysis of a Beethoven symphony, I'm not going to listen to a guy who's never heard of Beethoven.

So, institutional discrimination that kept women out of math and science whether it's real or not, until women as a group reach the level that men have achieved in the same field, I'll take their tidbits with a grain of salt.

juanqunt • 2 points • 22 March, 2015 03:49 AM\*

He made some good points in the beginning, but this is complete bullshit:

The interesting part of the story is that the most effective tool feminists have is a misinterpretation of the study data. Feminist activists have convinced the under-informed public (including me until this week) that the gender pay gap is clearly demonstrated by studies. The result is that men are keenly aware they are being watched on this topic, and when you watch people they act more responsibly. So the bad interpretation of the data probably gets us to a better world. Who would act differently if they thought the studies said this: "There is a gender pay gap, and there are lots of potential explanations for it, but we haven't isolated all the variables." That would inspire no one to act differently.

While I think his ending message to girls is pretty good:

Despite thousands of years of gender bias, women are succeeding in every field that interests them. The gender pay gap has shrunk to the point where we can not identify gender bias as a cause. You are all winners. And all paths are open.

Even though I'm not convinced by the thousands of years of gender bias. Women had plenty of power behind the scenes in the past. Even Helen of Troy for example showed that a single good looking girl has more power than all the kings combined.

hamsterbator • 2 points • 23 March, 2015 03:33 PM

It didn't exist. Maybe for the top 1% of society. But for everyone else, up until the recent modern ages men and women alike lived very hard shitty lives working jobs like coal mining, farming, hunting, brick building etc.

The top 1% of men had power and their women and children had good lives. Everyone else suffered through the shit.

pl231 • 1 points • 21 March, 2015 01:29 PM [recovered]

let's talk about what a crock of shit maternity leave is.

so with limited notice a company is forced to either

a) accept a less productive employee ( anyone that isn't delusional would admit a pregnant woman is on average less productive than a non-pregnant one)

b) give multiple months off to the woman, following a period of lowered productivity, while having to find a replacement in the meantime, yet dispatching that replacement when the woman returns to work(who will likely be at a limited productivity at this point as well)

god forbid life choices have negative repercussions. you don't get to screw your employer over just because you want to have a kid.

MattyAnon • 4 points • 21 March, 2015 06:55 PM

God forbid a woman pays anything to raise her own child.

No, this cost has to be put onto a man and onto her employer (paid for by everyone, ie you) and onto the state (paid for by you).

Maternity leave, divorce settlements, pay equality regardless of time away from her career - it's all designed to pay *her* for the time she spent raising *her* child.

DRMMR76 • 1 point • 20 March, 2015 11:32 PM

The fact is that if a company could get the same work, knowledge, experience and output from a woman as it could from a man, and get away with paying them less, every business out there would do it in a heartbeat in order to save money. The fact that this isn't happening shows that there is something false about this whole idea.

Pornography\_saves\_li • 0 points • 21 March, 2015 04:30 PM

So, a *cartoonist* is now an 'expert' on gender issues? Who cares what this guy says?

RedBigMan • 2 points • 22 March, 2015 01:28 PM

I suppose he can qualify as an 'expert' just as much as someone who wasted 4 years in a 'Womyn Studies' class. Plus he'll have the advantage of not being fully brainwashed by feminist dogma.