



We haven't come as far as people would like to believe

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Our cover artwork was submitted anonymously. The picture was drawn as a visual representation of the artist's experience of sexism in the various places of employment over the years. She has given permission for us to share the following story, which was modified to protect her privacy.



I drew this picture after I was informed, I did not get a promotion to an assistant superintendent position in a K-12 setting. I began working with a male superintendent about two years before the position became available. After my first year, the superintendent stated I was doing an outstanding job and that I would be perfect for a higher-level leadership role. Many others noted my work having gone above and beyond to make needed changes. Members of the Board of Education, students, parents, and community members commented positively on the work I had done. The superintendent gave me additional work so that I gained experience with higher level responsibilities. As we worked closer together, he would freely make comments that began to reveal his true character. He made degrading comments about people from marginalized groups. I was shocked. I stated it was not appropriate. He would continue to make comments even in meetings that I had been invited to. It seems that others are familiar with his style. In

one meeting I spoke up and called him out, professionally, to let him know his comments were not appropriate. The more I did this, the more he began to push back and say, "I need an assistant superintendent that I can trust" and "I need someone that isn't too sensitive and knows me well." When the assistant superintendent position was posted. I applied. I interviewed. I did very well. I did not get the job. He triumphantly shared with me that everyone on the search committee felt I was the most qualified, but that he made the final decision to go with someone else. He then said, "You should have been better able to deal with things I say that I really don't mean." Basically, I should just role with sexist, racist, homophobic remarks, because, after all, he doesn't intend offense. I drew that picture because people in power make great statements of equity, they create spaces to share concerns, write goals and objectives to ensure there's a culture of respect and social justice...yet, they don't follow it one bit. In my experiences, men hold out their hand to help, but we remain under their feet. My voice, as a woman, is not equally welcomed or respected. Men in power do not want equity. They do not want people from marginalized groups to really have a voice. They do not want to share their privilege and power.

I asked this artist if she know of Sarah Grimké's quote, "I ask no favor for my sex. All I ask of our brethren is that they take their feet off our necks." She stated was not aware of this quote. As a woman this struck me to my core to think how Sarah Grimké was born in 1792, and here we are 230 years after her birth, experiencing the same feelings of oppression based on gender. The artists drew this picture in 2022 which is symbolic of the very quote from Sarah Grimké in the 1700s.

After she drew this picture, she thought about transferring it onto a canvas. But decided against it. It was too painful to continue to work on it. She didn't want to clean it up or make it neat. Nothing about her experience was neat. It was all very messy.

One of the goals of our journal, *Empathetic Educators*, is to amplify others. We use various modalities to do so. We thank this female administrator to courageously tell her story and create a visual representation to share her experience of oppression.

At the time this call went out, we would have never imagined having to talk about oppression while sitting miles away from children entering foreign schools while fleeing genocide. Never would we have guessed that miles away the existence of LGBTQ+ students would be erased from Florida education culture. Never would we have imagined that members of congress would harass a survivor from the Parkland shooting.

There is no easy way to summarize what his happening now. We therefore leave you to read the entries in this addition.

We acknowledge those that made our publication possible again during these times.

A special thank you again to our guest co-editor, Dr. Jemel P. Aguilar. His countless hours spending time reading and providing feedback to the submissions and reviews is greatly appreciated.

Please consider making a donation to Empathetic Educators. All donations are generous, a person's \$25 dollars is another person's \$125. We equally appreciate all donations. Thank You.