

Letter: To fix profession's culture, the 'boys' also have to step up

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[Michael S. Baird](#) is a partner at [Stotis & Baird Chtd.](#) He writes in response to the letter from 2nd District Appellate Justice [Mary Seminara Schostok](#) published on Friday, "Time to push back against 'boys will be boys.'"

Justice Schostok recently wrote about being the object of an extremely offensive and sexist comment from a friend of a lawyer friend at a cocktail party. She urged other women to speak up when a man treats them with disrespect. She said disrespectful treatment will only stop when women say, "enough is enough."

She's right. But women shouldn't be the only ones.

There have been plenty of times I have heard male colleagues, friends and acquaintances say something demeaning to or about a woman.

Some of the speakers are dinosaurs who will soon be shuffling off to assisted living facilities. But too many of them don't have the excuse of being from a time when women were routinely marginalized.

I grew up in a time and place where it was common to hear relatives and neighbors use racial epithets. My parents told me that "silence equals acceptance." I learned to speak up.

"Not cool" and "not funny" and eventually "Is there something wrong with you?" are good responses.

Men shouldn't get a pass from their male friends for being disrespectful to a person because of their sex. It's not cool, it's not funny and it shows that there is something wrong with you.