

# What's Killing Office Romances?

The last pieces of career-related advice I thought I'd ever hear were "wear your lowest top to your next board meeting" and "linger too long by your colleague's desk."

However, this is precisely [the advice](#) that Ella Whelan gave last week on *sp!ked*.

To be fair, Whelan did not say that this advice would advance one's professional career. Rather, Whelan was lamenting the effects that the #MeToo movement has caused. She gave this advice in order to improve the relationships between men and women in the current workplace which, she claims, the #MeToo movement has destroyed.

According to a study conducted by Stanford University, one in ten Americans (11 percent) meet their spouse at work. However, in the mid-1990s, almost twice as many Americans (19 percent) met their spouse at work. "How depressing," comments Whelan.

These facts certainly raise questions. Why has the number of couples meeting at work declined by almost half over the past two decades? Will the numbers continue to decrease? And what, if anything, does the #MeToo movement have to do with the stats?

The Stanford study also found that in the mid-1990s, only two percent of couples met online. Today, though, 39 percent of couples meet online. Thus it appears that workplace romances may have been replaced by online romances. But Whelan thinks this is "more than just a technological change."

"The truth that no one seems willing to admit," she writes,

“is that many heterosexual women, even today, expect men to make the first move in a relationship.” This expectation is exactly what has been thwarted by the #MeToo movement. Though the intentions of the movement may have been good initially to protect women from sexual harassment in the workplace, Whelan thinks it has “revived a prudish fear of sex” and “has meant subjecting our sexual freedom to initiate romantic endeavours to the scrutiny of neo-Victorian regulations and codes of conduct.”

The #MeToo movement has caused many to see the value in the so-called “Mike Pence” rule, which is publicly mocked for exactly that – being too Victorian, prudish, or sexist. Out of fear of being accused of harassment, many men are taking what may appear to be extreme precautions when it comes to interacting with women in the work place. The last thing that a man would want to do is flat out hit on a woman – almost the definition of harassment.

But without men making the first move, as Whelan pointed out, relationships will never get off the ground without women sending “a memo to the guy you fancy, signed with your consent at the bottom.”

Ideas about gender equality are likely in play as well. When men and women are working together in an office, their roles are legally seen as the same – equal. However, in relationships, even though men and women remain equal, their roles are definitely *not* the same.

So is the #MeToo movement responsible for the death of the office romance? Yes, at least in part.

But you can decide for yourself if Whelan’s initial advice is valuable to its revival.

Regardless, I don’t think I’ll take it.

—  
*Dear Readers,*

*Big Tech is suppressing our reach, refusing to let us advertise and squelching our ability to serve up a steady diet of truth and ideas. Help us fight back by [becoming a member](#) for just \$5 a month and then join the discussion on Parler [@CharlemagneInstitute](#) and Gab [@CharlemagneInstitute](#)!*

Image Credit:

rawpixel.com via Pexels