



Story Money Impact



A BETTER MAN

CASE STUDY

IMPACT PRODUCING IN A CANADIAN FRAMEWORK

FUNDED BY



PRODUCED BY

Story Money Impact 2021 Pod Team

THE FILM

A BETTER MAN (2017)
93 MINUTES

SYNOPSIS

On a hot summer night 22 years ago, 18-year-old Attiya Khan ran through the streets frightened for her life. She was fleeing her abusive ex-boyfriend Steve. Now, all these years later, Attiya has asked Steve to meet. She wants to know how he remembers their relationship and if he is willing to take responsibility for his violent actions.

Their emotionally raw first meeting, filmed by Attiya with Steve's consent, is the starting point for A Better Man. The rough footage also marks a new beginning in Attiya's own recovery process — as well as an important starting point for Steve. For the first time ever, he speaks of the harm he caused, cracking the door open to his past.

A Better Man offers a nuanced look at the revelatory and healing potential for all parties when men take responsibility for their abuse. It also empowers audience members to challenge domestic violence, whether it's in their own relationships or as part of a broader movement for social change.

WEBSITE





TEAM

NFB Marketing:

Melissa Wheeler, Amanda Laukys

NFB Audience Development Team:

Jane Gutteridge, Donna Cowan CORRECT?

Education guide, co-authors:

Michelle Dalrymple, Steph Guthrie, Ross Johnstone, Rosemary Judd-Archer, Anne Koizumi, Sue Melville, Patricia Morneau

Additional Information:

Genre: Feature documentary

Length: 1 hr 19 min

FILM CREDITS

- Director, Writer: ATTIYA KHAN
- Co-Director, Writer, Editor: LAWRENCE JACKMAN
- Producer: CHRISTINE KLECKNER
- Producer, NFB: JUSTINE PIMLOTT
- Executive Producer: SARAH POLLEY
- Executive Producer: JANICE DAWE
- Executive Producer: KATHY AVRICH-JOHNSON
- Executive Producer, NFB: ANITA LEE
- Executive Producer, TVO: JANE JANKOVIC
- Director of Cinematography: IRIS NG
- Composer: LESLEY BARBER
- Associate Producer: LORI CHODOS
- Impact Producer: STEPH GUTHRIE
- Additional Cinematography:
JENNIFER ROWSOM, STAN BARUA, MARCUS MATYAS,
CURRY LEAMEN, JOHN PRICE, MARK CASWELL
- Sound Recording:
JASON HOPFNER, MARY WONG, BRUCE CAMERON
- Camera Assistant: JORDAN KAWAI, EVA PERCEWICZ,
STEPHANIE CORFIELD

FEATURING

Attiya Khan, Steve, Tod Augusta-Scott, Alex Mazer,
Seth Martiniuk, Sollange Umwali

Intervention Productions

In co-production with the National Film Board of Canada

Produced in association with TVO

A film by Attiya Khan and Lawrence Jackman

IMPACT

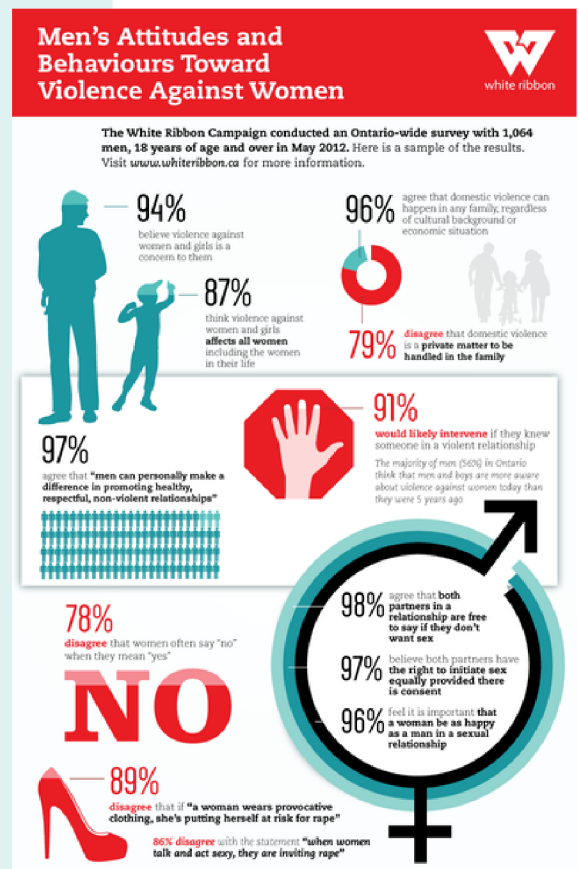
IMPACT CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

Gender-based violence is among the most pervasive human rights violations in the world, with the United Nations reporting that up to 70% of women have been subject to some form of physical or sexual abuse. In Canada, a woman is killed by domestic violence every six days.

Despite these startling statistics, relatively little has been done to educate or rehabilitate violent men. Systemic in nature, combatting domestic violence requires dramatic cultural and societal shifts. The UN Human Rights Council's resolution on eliminating domestic violence also emphasizes the important role that men and boys play in becoming strategic partners and allies to combat domestic abuse.

Within this issue landscape, the film team decided on a two-tiered approach for their impact campaign: personal and political. On the personal level, A Better Man provided men who have hurt others with a model for taking responsibility, changing behaviour and becoming part of the movement to end violence against women. On the other hand, survivors of intimate partner violence had the opportunity to witness men being accountable; creating the possibility for a measure of healing.

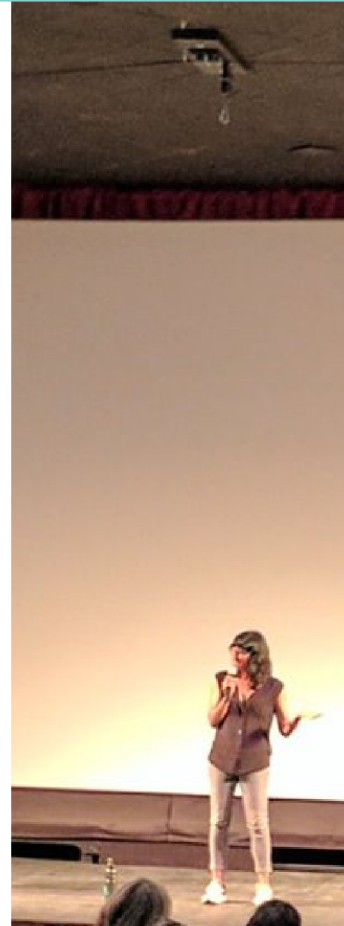
In the political arena, the impact campaign sought to persuade the public, policymakers and those who work to combat violence against women to include the education and rehabilitation of abusers in their strategy of prevention. Based on cutting-edge work by experts, practitioners and advocates, the impact campaign lobbied for policy, programs and support for domestic abusers to take responsibility for and change their behaviour, as a preventative measure.



IMPACT

In 2014, the filmmakers behind *A Better Man* launched a successful crowdfunding campaign while concurrently garnering endorsements and creating a committed audience of supporters. During this same time, the topic of violence against women was ignited in Canada when celebrity journalist Jian Ghomeshi was fired by the CBC and later charged with numerous counts of sexual assault. People were primed to take action against violence against women.

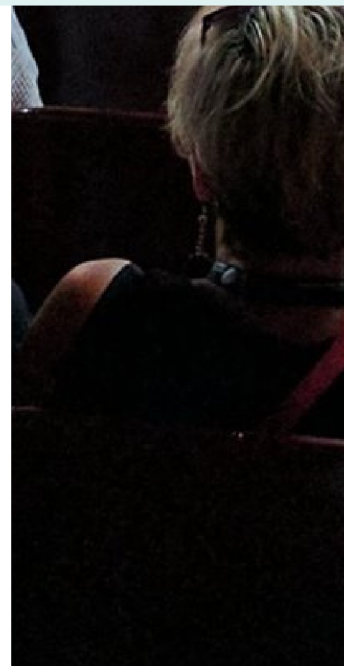
Through a great deal of behind the scenes efforts, relationship building, endorsements and more, the film garnered broad attention including from Hot Docs where it premiered. The film went on to have a spectacular run, screening at 14 Canadian and 26 international festivals, over 100 community screenings across Canada, and internationally in Australia, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico and the United Kingdom. It had over 10,000 views on NFB.ca and was widely distributed to the educational market through NFB Campus. Press included *Maclean's*, *The Globe & Mail*, *New Yorker*, *The Guardian* and *Italian Vanity Fair*.



Grassroots and treetops, you need both ends to build your audience: celebrities and partners.

- Christine Kleckner, Producer

By mobilizing service providers, teachers, workplaces and related sectors, the film and impact team forged partnerships and plans to help different sectors work together more effectively to tackle the issue of gender-based violence at its root. The team also connected with many health, government and social service (HGSS) organizations interested in using the film as a tool (e.g. Sinai Health System, Family Service Toronto, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police) and facilitated access to resources and support from government, industry, the media and the public. The UN Women's 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence provided an opportunity to promote awareness of the film and its campaign.



Workplaces can be spaces of support and catalysts of change for employees in violent relationships. A Better Man partnered with the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) to create a discussion guide for unions interested in sharing the film with their members. They also partnered with Make It Our Business, out of Western University in Ontario, who use the film to engage employers and other workplace stakeholders to prevent workplace domestic violence, to support employees at risk of or currently experiencing domestic violence, and to improve workplace health and safety. The Ontario Secondary Teachers Federation uses the film as a tool for staff training.



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**ALMOST 15,000
ATTENDEES AT OVER
150 SCREENINGS**



A digital marketing company was hired and successfully conducted an online advertising campaign to engage audiences and build awareness further. This campaign included strategic ads in English and French targeting specific interest groups on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. User data showed a relatively high interest from men. It was lamentable that more resources weren't available to explore further audience development within the male sector.

The filmmaking team used their personal contacts to influence decision and policy makers like for example, The Center for Court Innovation in New York which now uses the film as a tool for judge training. And The World Bank engage the filmmakers annually to contribute to their internal training. Many organizations continue to use the film as a tool to train staff of domestic abuse shelters and therapists use the interactive companion tool with clients who use violence.

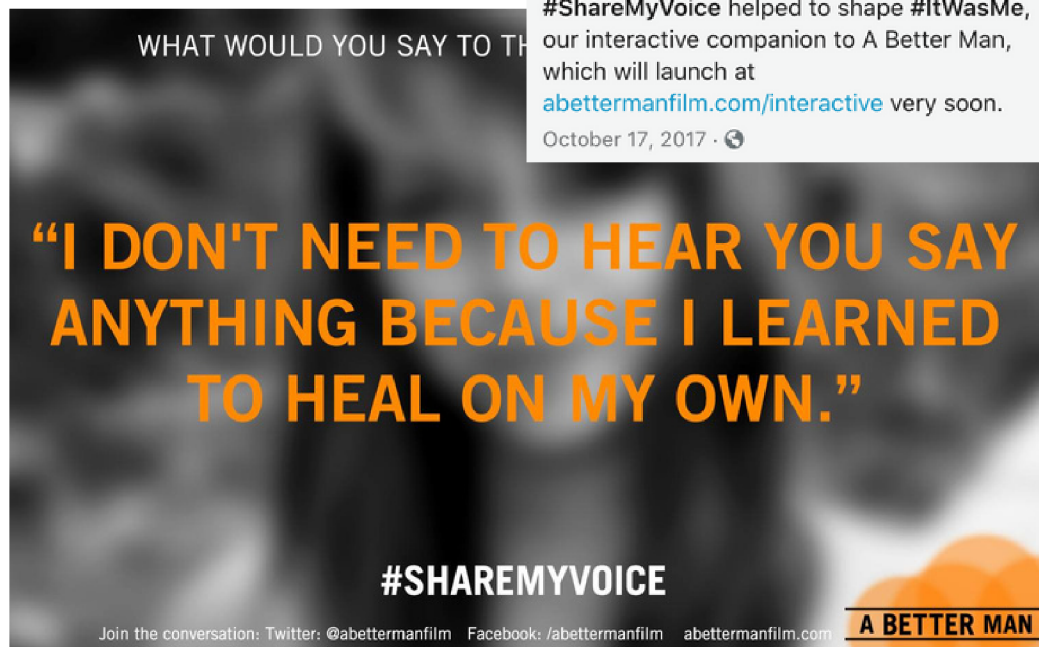
A Better Man and its impact campaign ignited an explosion of attention, contributing to the creation of a new paradigm for domestic abuse prevention. The film was launched during the #MeToo movement. Soon after, the hashtag #ItWasMe began to trend on twitter; men expressing statements of accountability and responsibility. #ItWasMe was a response to #MeToo and very likely as well, a response to this impactful and resonate film.

#ShareMyVoice Campaign

What would you say to the person who hurt you? In the summer of 2016, we hosted a Twitter chat to gather input from survivors about the questions they would like to ask the people who harmed them.

#ShareMyVoice helped to shape #ItWasMe, our interactive companion to A Better Man, which will launch at abettermanfilm.com/interactive very soon.

October 17, 2017 · 🌐



RESOURCE GUIDES

To amplify impact, the following resources were created:

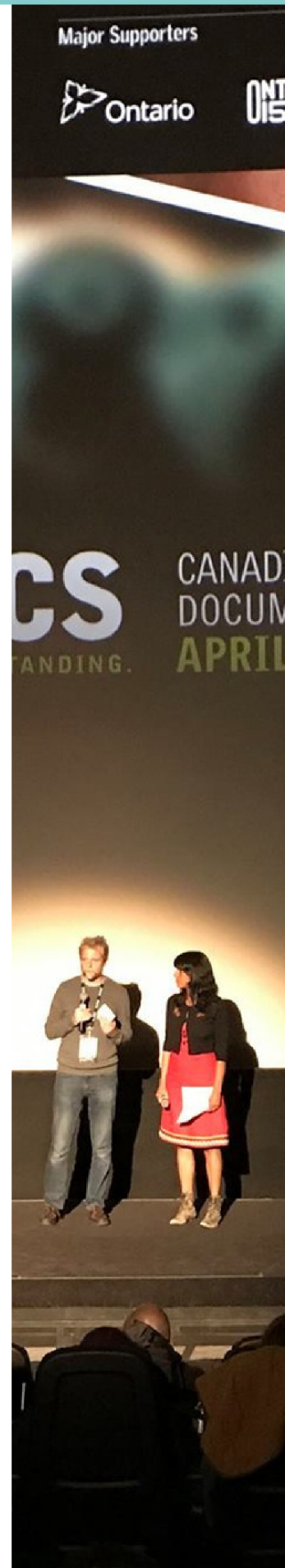
- Discussion guide and community screening guide
- High school learning kit created with Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation
- Men's group viewing guide
- Union discussion guide created with Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)

SELECT COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS, TORONTO

- Aboriginal Legal Services
- Canadian Labour Congress
- Canadian Women's Foundation
- Children's Aid Society of Toronto
- YWCA Toronto
- Family Service Toronto
- The Shelter Movers of Toronto
- Counterpoint Counselling & Educational Cooperative

SELECT ENDORSEMENTS

- Bridges Institute
- Women's Shelters Canada
- Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic
- Canadian Women's Foundation
- Auberge Shalom des Femmes
- White Ribbon



IT WAS ME; INTERACTIVE COMPANION WEBSITE

The producing team created the interactive website and campaign It Was Me, which shares the voices of six men's personal journeys toward nonviolence. This interactive companion amplified the film's themes of restorative justice, accountability, healing and dialogue garnered awards and was featured on CBC Metro Morning.



We really wanted to tell a very honest version of what a process looks like, a process that happens quite regularly in therapy sessions for couples who are having a hard time and that might have violence in their relationship. I think that we achieved what we set out to do, which was to share something that we don't often see shared on screen.

~Christine Kleckner, Producer

