Sexual Harassment in Middle and High Schools

The term sexual harassment usually conjures up images of bad behavior in the workplace. The problem of sexual harassment begins much earlier, however, perhaps as young as middle or even elementary school. According to research by The American Association of University Women, girls and young women experiencing unwelcome sexual advances or a hostile school environment are likely subject to the same types of impacts and adverse outcomes as adults in the workplace.

AAUW has been instrumental in the study of sexual harassment in middle and high schools, beginning with their landmark studies in 1993 and 2001. Given that most previous research on sexual harassment has focused on the workplace, the literature with respect to sexual harassment in schools has been relatively sparse, focusing primarily on prevalence and whether it was reported. Less is known about risk factors, causes, effects, or effective mechanisms for prevention (Fineran & Bolen, 2006).

Definitions

Two main sets of behaviors are included in the legal definition of sexual harassment. The first is termed *quid quo pro* sexual harassment, and includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature in which (a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment, or (b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual.

The second is termed *hostile work environment* and includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, such as conduct which has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an employee’s work performance.

As a public way to commemorate its 25th anniversary, The Center for Research on Women has invited 25 prominent Memphis women to take photographs of a woman “at work.” These photos, along with a brief statement from the photographers about their subjects and reasons for their choices, will be mounted and shown in a free public exhibit at the University of Memphis Art Museum on Saturday evening November 10, 2007 entitled “SnapShots: Memphis Women at Work”. CROW will sell the framed photographs to raise funds for research projects.

So who are the guest photographers? “The invitations have just gone out, so for now it’s a secret,” says Rebecca Terrell, CROW’s Assistant Director and creator of the event. “We can say they are all amazing women...passionate, highly accomplished community leaders.”
The theme of this issue, “Safe in School?,” was planned several months ago in conjunction with two projects CROW is working on: the initiative on sexual harassment in middle and high schools (see page 1), and the Memphis Safe Campus Consortium (MSCC; see page 3). In the wake of the recent Virginia Tech massacre, however, violence on campuses is again in the forefront of national consciousness. As we deal with the aftermath of this horrific event, I am struck again by what is missing from the dialogue surrounding this and other recent high profile cases which, at their core, are about gender.

Take Don Imus’ racist and sexist rant against the Rutgers University Women’s basketball team as a case in point. The comments he made sparked a dialogue about racism that spiraled into dialogue about rap music and other media consumed by children and adolescents. Only later did the sexist nature of his comments begin to get attention, but it highlights for me something that often gets lost in the discussion: women and girls are so constantly bombarded with sexist comments and innuendo that we become desensitized to the hostility that this kind of language conveys. When this hostile environment creeps into the workplace it is called sexual harassment. Now the evidence is mounting that girls are experiencing sexual harassment in schools as well, and that it has become so common to their educational experience that they shrug it off and move on (see State of the World, page 6).

The Duke lacrosse team case similarly highlights the intersectionalities of race and gender, as well as the class differences between the accuser and the accused. Although the evidence in this case suggests that no assault ever took place, it does raise the issue of nonconsensual sex on college campuses and the difficult “he said/she said” scenarios that ensue. Research and the legal system have documented the mismatch between the perceptions of victims and of young men who are accused of sexual assault in situations that they perceived to be consensual (e.g., acquaintance rape). In our current cultural climate, our youth are bombarded with messages about what it means to be masculine, including being dominant, aggressive, and always seeking sexual conquest. If sex is portrayed as the ultimate commodity, one can see how young men trying to navigate sexual relationships might not be clear about the line between what is and is not acceptable.

Finally, there is the tragedy at Virginia Tech. This story, too, is about gender, although it is about many other things, as well – gun control, the mental health system, bullying, privacy rights, to name a few. But I keep waiting to hear more about the murderer’s previous pattern of stalking that emerged early on in the news media. What would have happened if the police had been able to act on reported complaints of the shooter’s previous stalking victims?

Our children are being raised and educated in a culture fraught with sexual violence. How many more girls and young women have to be harassed, stalked, raped, or murdered on campuses before we stand up and do something meaningful? Students everywhere are depending on us to find the answers.
Project Aims to Reduce Violence Against Women on Memphis College Campuses

As part of a group called the Memphis Safe Campus Consortium (MSCC), the Center for Research on Women has received funding from the Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women, to help create a community-wide protocol for (1) responding to, (2) educating college students, faculty and staff about, and (3) preventing and reducing incidents of, violence against women on college campuses in Memphis. CROW is charged with coordinating all MSCC activities on the UofM campus.

Participating partner campuses include Crichton College, Christian Brothers University, and Rhodes College. Community partners include the Memphis Sexual Assault Resource Center, The Exchange Club Family Center, the Memphis Crisis Center, and the Shelby County Crime Victims Center.

With the involvement of campus-wide Advisory Committees including representatives from Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Campus Safety and Security, Athletics, Resident Housing, Student Health Services and Counseling Services, Consortium partners will work to:

1) Develop and expand support services including psychological counseling for victims of violence on Memphis campuses;
2) Conduct training on the impact of violence against women, and means to reduce violence against women, for campus safety and security employees, campus judicial boards, students, athletes, faculty, staff, and applicable contract vendors;
3) Develop and implement effective campus policies, protocols, orders, and services specifically devoted to prevent, identify, and respond to violent crimes against women on the Memphis campuses; and
4) Improve methods of communication between local and campus law enforcement and victim service providers to ensure a coordinated community response to violence against women on Memphis campuses.

For more information on CROW’s participation in the Memphis Safe Campus Consortium, contact Teresa Diener, Project Coordinator, at 678-2293 or via email at tdiener@memphis.edu. For more information on the city-wide consortium contact Lynn Wildmon, MSCC Project Director, Crichton College at 901-320-9700 ext. 9726 or lwildmon@crichton.edu.


- A survey of university under - graduates revealed that 20 percent had been stalked or harassed by a former dating partner. (National Center for Victims of Crime)

- 3 in 10 college women reported being injured emotionally or psychologically from being stalked. (National Center for Victims of Crime)
CROW Scholars Receive Awards

CROW Associate Director Dr. Phyllis Betts and her partner Dr. Richard Janikowski received the 2007 Excellence in Engaged Scholarship Award from the University of Memphis. This major new award was created by the University to acknowledge and encourage partnerships where expertise from both the community and the academy combine to create viable, sustainable change. The team was recognized for excellent scholarship and for developing a matrix of community partnerships involving the Criminal Justice System of Memphis and Shelby County, the Memphis/Shelby Crime Commission, the Memphis Police Department, Memphis Area Women’s Council and the Shelby County Domestic Violence Council.

Doing Without: Women and Work after Welfare Reform, edited by CROW Affiliate Dr. Jane Henrici, has been awarded Honorable Mention by the Susan Koppelman Award Committee which gives out the award for Best Anthology, Multi-Author, or Edited Book in Feminist Studies in Popular Culture/American Culture each year. The award is supported by the Popular Culture/American Culture Association. The award for 2006 was given to Daughters of Earth: Feminist Science Fiction in the Twentieth Century, edited by Justine Larbalestier, Wesleyan University Press.

CROW Affiliate Dr. Leigh Anne Duck, Assistant Professor of English and Interim Director of Women’s Studies, received a 2006-2007 Distinguished Teaching Award from The University of Memphis Alumni Association. This award annually recognizes excellence in teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

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SnapShots, page 1, cont’d

leaders. It will be exciting to see who they choose to photograph and why.”

The Center is also assembling a group of professional women photographers including Lisa Buser and Annette Fournet to serve as consultants to the project, and who will act as mentors. These professionals will provide guidelines and suggestions for taking photographic portraits, and will conduct at least one hands-on “training session” for any guest photographer who may want more assistance.

“We are hoping to raise awareness of the Center’s work, our history, and our overall research agenda,” states Center Director Dr. Lynda Sagrestano. “The ‘women at work’ theme is intentionally a little ambiguous. It raises such questions as ‘how is work defined in this culture? In this community? What does ‘women’s work’ look like?’ I think the exhibit will give us all lots to think and talk about. We’re looking forward to a fantastic evening!”

Center for Research on Women

November 10, 2007
University of Memphis
Art Museum
Forum Looks at Health Barriers to Women’s Economic Self-Sufficiency

Unintended pregnancies, heart disease, depression and intimate partner violence were all on the agenda at CROW’s 2007 Community Issues Forum entitled “Many Rivers to Cross: Health & Related Barriers to Women’s Economic Self-Sufficiency in Memphis.” The event was designed to raise the public’s awareness of some of the specific health issues that put women at risk for poverty in our community.

Held April 12, 2007 at the Urban Child Institute/University of Memphis Downtown Research Site, the event was co-sponsored by the Memphis Area Women’s Council, an independent non-profit alliance acting to improve the status of women, and the Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis. The Center for Reproductive Health sponsored a public post-forum reception.

A panel of scholars, clinicians, and service providers, moderated by Jennifer L. Rawls, Executive Director of the Tennessee Economic Council for Women, shared data from their own and other relevant research.

“The forum provided a unique opportunity to learn how a variety of health issues in Memphis combine to place women, especially women of color, at a distinct disadvantage for entering and remaining in the work force,” said Center Director Dr. Lynda Sagrestano.

“Although some of Memphis’ biggest health issues like diabetes and obesity had begun to be identified and addressed, the disproportionate impact of others like depression, domestic violence and cardiovascular disease on women, and their ability to earn a living, needed to be examined in more detail.”

Forum presentations included:

Health issues of women in Memphis public housing by Laura Ellen Harris, Ph.D., Faculty Affiliate, CROW; Assistant Professor, Division of Public and Nonprofit Administration, University of Memphis

Depression in women moving from welfare to work by Muriel C. Rice, Ph.D., University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center, Memphis

Cardiovascular disease and obesity in women in West Tennessee by Cheryl Travis, Ph.D., University of Tennessee Knoxville

Impact of intimate partner violence on women in the workplace by Andrea Thompson Adam, Program Director, Jobs in Community, Uptown Alliance, Memphis

Impact of unintended pregnancies by Owen Phillips, M.D., OB/GYN, University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center, Memphis

Overview of local Workforce Development efforts by Deborah Clubb, Executive Director, Memphis Area Women’s Council

Public health policy and women’s employment by Phyllis G. Betts, Ph.D., Associate Director for Community-Based Research and Partnerships, Center for Research on Women; Director of the Center for Community Building and Neighborhood Action (CBANA), University of Memphis.

A number of these presentations are available for download at http://crow.memphis.edu.
I’ve never been raped or abused, as far as I know.

I’ve never been spied on. I consider most of the boys I hang out with to be nice and friendly. So when I was asked to speak on how sexual harassment affects me everyday, my first thought was, “It doesn’t.” But when I started thinking about it according to a list of actions I was given, I was forced to realize that it happens everywhere, all the time.

It’s just so prevalent that I didn’t even notice.

Yesterday I was walking through the Auditorium from one class to another. A guy, fairly large but not a football player, grabs a girl, about my size, around the waist. He lifts her up off the floor and her skirt scoots up to her waist because of the way she is kicking her legs. He holds her over the seats that form a wall on either side of the hallway. She is upside down, flashing the school, with her head being held an inch above the concrete floors. She screams for about the first second after he startles her, but quickly turns it into a giggle.

He’s laughing much harder and quite suddenly he drops her. Her shoulders hit the floor and her skirt scoots up to her waist because of the way she is kicking her legs. He holds her over the seats that form a wall on either side of the hallway. She is upside down, flashing the school, with her head being held an inch above the concrete floors. She screams for about the first second after he startles her, but quickly turns it into a giggle.

He’s laughing much harder and quite suddenly he drops her. Her shoulders hit the concrete with a loud smack and her giggles are interrupted for a second as she gasps. She covers this by giving him a playful hit on the shoulder. She is smiling, but she is also rubbing her arm.

The thing that makes me remember this and cringe is the fact that I walked right on by. I didn’t notice until I was right next to the door on my way out and I thought, “Should I say something? Should I try to stop it?” But I don’t. The girl wouldn’t want me to because for her this is just attention. This guy is showing her that he’s willing to play.

That is what scares me about sexual harassment in school. The majority of girls don’t think most of it is bad. They think it’s fun and see it as a validation. I wish all girls had enough confidence in themselves to not need guys to hurt them to feel pretty, but that’s not the state of the world right now.

Everyday I avoid a certain area of the Cafeteria, going quite a bit out of my way to get around it. This is where a group of guys always sit; they have claimed it as their own. When I used to pass by they always said something, from, “Hey honey, JJ here says he wants your number” to the day when I just couldn’t continue to walk through anymore because they asked with all seriousness, “How much?” I know this is a group of pigs, that they think being this rude makes them cool. I know that really the joke will be on them someday when they’re in jail after patting a female client on the butt and calling her, “Baby.” I still avoid them.

On the other hand there are many girls who don’t stand for any of that. Girls who look them in the eye and say, “Please stop grabbing my tit,” and the guy listens. There are girls who actually slap the guy instead of giving him a playful smack. These are usually girls with confidence. Girls with other things to do besides worry about boys.

That’s what I want to fix. I want to give every girl that confidence and industry.

I want to be remembered for what I changed, not for who oppressed me.
“Femme Film Fest” Gets Girls Talking

Films about teen girls, power and choices took the screen at the first Girls for Change “Femme Film Fest” held at the University of Memphis on Saturday, March 24.

The free public event opened with documentary-maker Suzanne Niedland introducing her film Miss Lil’s Camp about radical activist Lillian Smith and her camp for girls in Georgia in the 1940s. Local filmmakers Amy Frazier and Lynda Ingram were on hand to show and discuss their recent work during lunch.

Afternoon selections highlighted raw contemporary issues in Catherine Hardwicke’s 2003 drama Thirteen which follows a young girl’s downward spiral into drugs, sex, and self-mutilation, and a lighter but no less relevant look at girl culture in the Lindsay Lohan black comedy Mean Girls.

Planned by and for girls ages 13-17, the one day festival followed months of discussion about what matters to girls, issues confronting them and ways they can be empowered and organized to take action and make change.

“With Memphis’s crazy teen pregnancy rate, documented incidents of early sexual activity, high rates of domestic violence and a recent survey indicating that nearly 8 of 10 girls experience sexual harassment at school – our girls have a lot to deal with,” said Deborah Clubb, executive director of the Memphis Area Women’s Council. “Our girls leaders were ready to talk about these critical issues and felt that film was a powerful tool to begin these conversations.”

Girls for Change is a leadership and policy training series for ages 13-17 sponsored by the Memphis Area Women’s Council, the Center for Research on Women, and the Women’s Studies Program at the University of Memphis.

For more information call 678-2642 or visit www.memphiswomen.org.
Don’t forget CROW in your list of annual charitable contributions…

Our researchers are working on issues of vital importance to women and girls in Memphis, the U.S. South, and the nation, including:

- Teen pregnancy and sexual risk-taking
- Low wage jobs
- Unfair labor practices
- Sexual harassment in the schools
- Gender and race related disparities in health care & health research
- Immigration

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*October 1, 2006 - April 30, 2007*

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individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. This can include (a) gender harassment (e.g., saying things to put women or men down; showing, using, or handing out dirty pictures; telling dirty jokes and stories), and (b) unwanted sexual attention (making someone uncomfortable by staring at them; touching someone; asking someone repeatedly after they have said no).

Although the legal definitions explicitly refer to the workplace environment and outcomes, sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, is prohibited under Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 in any educational setting, program, or arena that receives federal funding. Furthermore, students can seek monetary damages for sexual harassment from educational institutions.

AAUW Findings

The AAUW (1993, 2001) concluded that approximately 80% of students in public schools experience harassment from peers or school personnel, when in school buildings or on school grounds. Harassment takes place in public places, often in front of teachers or other school personnel who do not try to deter it, creating a “hostile” environment (AAUW, 1993, 2001; Stein et al., 1993). Studies consistently suggest that girls experience higher frequency of harassment than boys, and that boys are more likely to be the perpetrators of harassment than girls. Findings with respect to race differences in perpetration or victimization are equivocal (Fineran & Bolen, 2006). Consequences of sexual harassment in school are varied, and include physical, psychological, and educational problems (AAUW, 1993, 2001; Duffy et al., 2004; Houston, 1996; Juvonen et al., 2000; Lee et al., 1996).

Situation in Memphis

The problem of sexual harassment in schools is prevalent in Memphis. Girls for Change, a program for young women ages 13 to 17 developed by the Memphis Area Women’s Council, the Center for Research on Women, and the University of Memphis Women’s Studies program, conducted a small (N = 99) pilot study using a shortened, modified version of the AAUW survey and found that 76% had experienced or witnessed some form of harassment in school. Although the participants (mean age 13.88, 86% African American, 92% public school) were not representative of students in public and private schools in Memphis, anecdotal reports from girls indicate that the problem is prevalent across all types of schools and across racial and other demographic boundaries.

Furthermore, data from the 2005 Youth Risk Behavioral Survey (2006) indicated that students in the Memphis City Schools were more likely to have had sexual intercourse, have multiple partners, have become pregnant or impregnate a partner, have sexual intercourse before the age of 13, experience dating violence, and experience forced sexual intercourse than the national average.

The terms sexual harassment, sexual violence, and sexual assault are somewhat confounded, as many of the behaviors that are included in the definitions of sexual harassment overlap with emotional abuse and verbal abuse that are often precursors to or components of physical and sexual assault (Fineran & Bolen, 2006). For this reason, it makes sense to consider physical and sexual assault as potential consequences of sexual harassment. In addition, the sexualized nature of interactions in schools, beginning at young ages, likely plays a role in the increasingly younger initiation of sexual activity, which in turn is associated with unintended teen pregnancy.

Planned Research

To explore this potential connection between harassment and early sexual initiation, CROW and MAWC have begun a collaborative, multi-year initiative. In the first phase, our goal is to understand the experiences of sexual harassment among middle and high schools girls in Memphis area public and private school systems, as well as the impact of these experiences on their academic and personal development. We plan to gather and analyze survey data from local middle and high school aged students concerning their experiences with sexual harassment, its impact on self esteem, mental health,
Selected References on Stalking, Sexual Harassment, and Violence in U.S. Schools, Colleges & Universities

Prepared by Teresa Diener, May 2007


A student repeatedly calls a fellow classmate a “fag” and a “queer” and continuously pushes him in the hallway between classes. A female student is called a “slut” and a “bitch” by another classmate, who also stares at her breasts and makes comments about her body. Which of these scenarios is bullying and which is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is bullying according to authors Bernice Resnick Sandler and Harriett M. Stonehill in their book, *Student-To-Student Sexual Harassment K-12: Strategies and Solutions for Educators to Use in the Classroom, School, and Community*. As the title indicates, this book is written for educators who wish to develop policies and procedures for dealing with peer sexual harassment. Sandler, a Senior Scholar at the Women’s Research and Education Institute in Washington, DC, who also serves as an expert witness in sexual harassment and discrimination cases, and Stonehill, an educator, administrator and Director of the Megaskills Education Center in Washington, DC, offer readers over 700 strategies for dealing with peer sexual harassment including building comprehensive programs, developing training, and educating the school community.

When we think of sexual harassment many of us think back to the days of Anita Hill and Clarence Thomas. We think of adults in the work place telling lewd and inappropriate jokes, discussing sexual desires and assailing co-workers with unwanted sexual attention. Rarely do we think of children experiencing sexual harassment in their hallways; and rarely do we think of sexual harassment as bullying. Sexual harassment is defined as “any behavior of a sexual nature that is unwanted and unwelcome.”

According to Sandler and Stonehill, sexual harassment is also “a form of bullying, where one student attempts to intimidate another student by using sexuality as a weapon.” This form of bullying includes calling girls, “sluts,” “whores,” “cows” or “lesbians” while calling boys “fags” and “pussies.” But sexual harassment, according to the authors does not stop there, it involves “spreading sexual rumors; unwanted phone calls, mail or email; snapping bras, pulling down pants, or flipping up skirts; masturbating or touching of one’s genitals or simulating intercourse.”

Though girls are more likely to be harassed than boys, boys also experience sexual harassment at the hands of other boys and girls. According to the authors it is the responsibility of the school district and the individual schools themselves to develop policies and procedures that deal with sexual harassment, and that it is imperative that student’s complaints are taken seriously and dealt with in a sensitive and timely manner.

When schools fail to take action it is the student who suffers. Using anecdotal evidence, Sandler and Stonehill demonstrate the devastating affects that peer sexual harassment has on the lives of students. “A ten-year-old girl in a Tennessee elementary school was repeatedly harassed by two eleven-year-old boys who attempted to rape and assault her...the girl stated in court that this happened twenty to thirty times...[she] once passed a note to her teacher who tore it up and told her not to tattle. The girl missed school, her grades dropped, and she could not finish work.”

A gay student who was jumped and repeatedly kicked in the face while being called a “faggot” “took two vials of sleeping pills and antidepressants” thinking that “before someone kills me, I’m gonna kill myself.” Schools are not only morally responsible for taking action against such atrocities, but legally as well. Student-to-

Review by Teresa Diener

Teresa Diener received her Master of Arts from the Women’s Studies Program at the University of Memphis. She is currently serving as the UofM Project Coordinator for Memphis Safe Campus Consortium.
Memphis Area Women’s Council
Arming girls with words, ways to fight for their rights

“Sexual harassment” was an alien phrase to the teenaged girls who came together in 2005 to create Girls for Change.

They didn’t know what to call the creepy and even dangerous things that were happening to them all around their schools. They didn’t know these things were against the law.

They didn’t know they had the right to make it stop.

They know now. And in the coming months, the Memphis Area Women’s Council and the Center for Research on Women will give them and everyone in the Memphis community critical and specific information about harassment that is happening in our schools and what it’s doing to our children.

At Girls for Change, the leadership and empowerment program for ages 13-17 sponsored by CROW, MAWC and the Women’s Studies program at the University of Memphis, girls talked about the groping, name-calling, leering, graffiti and other activities that they saw or experienced in cafeterias, stairwells, classroom hallways, and bathroom walls.

If they reported to teachers or administrators, they were told “boys will be boys.” Other girls typically said, “Oh, that means he likes you.”

Girls told us about watching teachers watch these things happen – and do nothing.

Girls were dealing with it by learning which places and which people to avoid. And they all told us that there was no one at school who cared, no one to whom they could report these incidents and get anything done.

We gave Girls for Change the language, the law and a chance to work on a new, long-term project to address sexual harassment in local schools.

We told them: “Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual overtures which create what the law calls a hostile environment. No one – not other students, teachers, coaches – no one has the right to do these things to you.”

Sadly, they were familiar with the examples: dirty jokes, sexual name calling, comments about a person’s physical /sexual development, requests for sex, nude pictures, touching, grabbing, pinching, graffiti, repeated requests for a date or generalizations about members of one sex or different expectations based on gender.

When Girls for Change surveyed 99 girls last fall, 8 in 10 reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment at some time during their school lives. The largest number, 42%, reported sexual comments, jokes or gestures and 35% said they were touched, grabbed or pinched in a sexual way.

Most did not report the incident.

Most of the harassment was student to student (73%) but 28% also said teachers harass students. Nine percent noted that security guards were the perpetrators; 7% cited a bus driver; 6% said a coach, teacher or substitute teacher; 4%, a counselor; 3% a student employee and 2%, a principal.

The girls are coping – by changing their seats in class to get farther away from someone (30%); by not talking in class or by avoiding the harasser (24%); by staying away from particular places on school grounds (17%). Girls reported thinking about changing schools (24%), trouble sleeping (19%), trouble paying attention in class (18%) and loss of appetite (14%).

Armed with a more comprehensive survey, Girls for Change will develop a peer education program along with policy and advocacy tools that girls can use to approach school boards and administrators in their quest for better sexual harassment policies and policy enforcement (see Sexual Harassment in Middle and High Schools, page 1.)

Girls will take the lead in getting the law enforced, to make school a safer place for all.
Forums Reflect Range of Women’s Research

CROW’s 2006-2007 Women’s Research Forum series featured talks by two health psychologists, an historian/Egyptologist, and a mathematical statistician.

The series opened in October when Center Director Dr. Lynda Sagrestano presented her research on the psychosocial influences on adverse birth outcomes among pregnant adolescents.

In February Dr. Suzanne Onstine of the University of Memphis discussed her historical research of the roles of women in ancient Egyptian religious hierarchy.

In a March presentation on understanding the relationship between diet and disease, Dr. Pamela Shaw of the Biostatistics Research Branch of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases at NIH discussed the ways in which dietary reporting errors can bias results in a study of diet and disease risk.

The talk highlighted statistical methods that Dr. Shaw has developed to adjust for the reporting error typically observed in nutritional assessment data. Dr. Shaw also participated in an informal conversation with UoM faculty members about the career obstacles and opportunities for women in the math and science fields.

The series wrapped up in April with a presentation by Dr. Cheryl Travis of the University of Tennessee Knoxville on her research showing significant gender and racial disparities in the treatment of cardiovascular disease.

“Women continue to contribute vital new knowledge in so many fields of study,” said Sagrestano. “It continues to be part of CROW’s mission to disseminate this kind of research to a broader audience, and it was an honor for us to share the work of these outstanding scholars with our colleagues and community.”

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Student sexual harassment is prohibited by several federal and state laws such as Title IX, state civil laws, state criminal sexual assault and abuse laws, as well as federal, state and local laws against hate crimes, in addition to others. Several cases have been brought, and won, against school districts for ignoring sexual harassment using these laws.

Sandler and Stonehill provide educators with a detailed and comprehensive plan to deal with student-to-student sexual harassment. Though repetitive at times, their handbook is a great reference guide and an easy read. It details, step-by-step, how to go about creating effective policies in the schools. While intended for the school community, I would urge parents and anyone interested in issues concerning children to use this book as an educational tool. I would also urge students to read this book and educate themselves. This book could be an empowering tool for young boys and girls to start taking action, on their own behalf, in their school communities.

Sexual Harassment, page 9, cont’d

and academic performance, and its links to early sexual activity and unplanned pregnancy.

Using data collected through the research phase of this project, we plan to create an intervention program that will empower girls to affect change related to the conditions surrounding sexual harassment in their school environments. In addition, we plan to develop policy and advocacy tools for use by the young women in Girls for Change who will approach school administrators and school boards to seek change in this domain, including enacting better sexual harassment policies in the schools and implementing the peer education program developed in phase two.

It is our vision that the young women in Girls for Change will play a central role in all phases of the project, including collaborating in the development of the peer education program and developing the advocacy tools. Through this process they will learn to identify and articulate problems, conduct and utilize research, and organize with others to take action on issues they believe in.

(Sexual harassment, page 15)
Selected publications available from the University of Memphis

**Center for Research on Women**

**Across Races & Nations: Building New Communities in the U.S. South**  
2007 (370 pages), English and Spanish, $25.00 + shipping & handling

**The New Latino Workforce: Employers' Experiences in Memphis, Mendoza, Marcela.**  

**Latino Immigrants in Memphis, Tennessee: Their Local Economic Impact, Mendoza, Marcela, David H. Ciscel, and Barbara Ellen Smith.**  
2001 (16 pages), $5.

**Advocates for Girls: Promoting Success In Early Adolescence, Smith, Barbara Ellen.**  

**Profiles: A Report On The Women And Girls Of Greater Memphis, Schmidt, Martha.**  
1997 (40 pages), $10.

References


Across Races & Nations:  
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University of Memphis
Women’s Advocates from South Korea Make Stop in Memphis

Staff from the Memphis Area Women’s Council, CROW, Women's Studies and invited guests welcomed visitors from South Korea to the CROW offices for coffee and conversation on May 3. The group, which included lawyers, a prosecutor, university professors and researchers and the president of the Korean Women’s Trade Union, was interested in learning about advocacy for women in the U.S., women in the political system and women’s legal rights. Their Memphis visit was hosted by the Memphis Council on International Visitors.

The women were also scheduled to meet with public and private sector professionals in several other U.S. cities to examine the successes and challenges of women’s active participation and leadership in political life in the U.S.; governmental and non-governmental efforts to promote women’s leadership and advance women’s rights; social programs designed to assist and empower women and minorities; and laws and efforts aimed at safeguarding women’s human rights both in the U.S. and around the world.

Kim Eun Ju, executive director, Center for Korean Women & Politics; Deborah M. Clubb, executive director, Memphis Area Women’s Council; Youngjoo Lee, senior prosecutor, Judicial Research & Training Institute; Dr. Lynda Sagrestano, director, Center for Research on Women; Leigh Anne Duck, interim director, Women's Studies; Teresa Diener, project coordinator, CROW; Ruby Bright, executive director, Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis. (seated) Sun-Mee Jin, attorney; Nam-Hee Park, president, Korean Women’s Trade Union; Jeong-Hwa Ha, Educational Program Team, Busan Women’s Center; Heejin Cho, director, Trial Department, Seoul Central District Prosecutor’s Office.