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No longer are individuals who suffer from gender bashing, domestic violence, and all forms of sexual assault referred to as victims, but rather as survivors. As a survivor, one not only reflects upon and processes the violence experienced, but discovers tools and coping skills to heal and henceforth live life productively.

In this Journal of the Health Resource Center, a similar balance is evidenced in that these articles define the violence and emphasize steps and actions that aid survivors in regaining control of their lives. It is through actions taken that most survivors empower themselves to proceed forward and regain his/her control. Remember that no one deserves to experience any form of violence, regardless of his/her alcohol and/or drug use, appearance, emotional or mental condition, age, sexual orientation or gender; but yet society often views survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault as people who brought this abuse upon themselves.

On hearing about an acquaintance rape, there are some who might respond in the following manner, “Well, she was practically wearing nothing. It is not surprising she was assaulted.” Or, “He was s-o-o-o drunk, no wonder he got hurt.” Being drunk or scantily clad does not advertise consent to be raped, sexually assaulted or physically abused by someone. Due to society’s judgment and condemnation of victims, many survivors remain silent. Having already been physically/verbally assaulted by the perpetrator, why break their silence and be attacked by relatives, friends, and society?

Thus, these articles commend those on the immense COURAGE it takes to transition from victim to survivor. Each survivor navigates a path best suited for him/her. No matter the route, there are specific stepping stones benefitting all survivors that are:

- Clarifying your importance, self-worth and self-esteem, in order to move forward in the healing process.
- Outsing yourself. Tell others about the act of violence that was perpetrated against you.
- Understanding that you are not the cause of the violence taken against you. No one deserves or asks to be hurt.
- Rectifying the wrongs done into power that no longer pulls one downward, but instead propels one forward.
- Asserting yourself by discovering how best to meet your needs.
- Gratitude for friends, family members, and organizations that listen and believe a survivor’s truth.
- Enabling yourself to find the best assistance on your road to recovery.

For those who might be a friend, colleague or relative of a survivor, we, too, need a support system. This issue’s concluding article specifies organizations on the campus of California State University, Long Beach that not only meet the needs of the survivor, but also support and aid those close to the survivor. Unfortunately, these acts of violence are increasing on college campuses, particularly “date rape”. Therefore, it benefits all readers to use this journal as a reference source. Take actions toward assisting, listening to, and supporting survivors to discover their solution and regain power.
Breaking the Cycle: Uncovering Origins of Verbal Gender Bashing
Anthony Benjamin Cabangun

Many of us laugh at jokes that we consider harmless, even though they may target specific human traits, sexual orientations, or ethnicities. Research indicates such jokes are harmful, especially those that refer to gender. For those who laugh at jokes about women, they may never consider that they are “gender bashing”. In fact, they may label those who think such jokes are bashing, as people who are far too sensitive, since our society nurtures and condones this form of ridicule. Some children learn to mock even before entering school, but once in school, they witness forms of “bashing” daily. In order to break the cycle, each person must look to themselves to change behaviors that may encourage and support “gender bashing”.

Gender Jokes: Funny?

Q. How many men does it take to open a beer?
A. None. It should be opened by the time she brings it.

A Man’s Perfect Breakfast:
He’s sitting at the table and his son is on the cover of a box of Wheaties.
His mistress is on the cover of Playboy.
And his wife is on the back of the milk carton.

Gender Brutality: Not Funny!

In April 2007, two teens who brutally kidnapped and beat a gay teenage boy during a house party in Edgewood, New Mexico, were sentenced to a four year prison term and one year in custody of the Children, Youth, and Families Department, respectively. The teens were reported to have kidnapped the gay teen, and another woman who was at the same party. The woman was held in a camper and beaten, while the gay teen was tied up and brutalized for hours, allegedly to turn him straight. The male victim suffered bleeding on the brain, and a concussion, as well as facial lacerations and bruising.

In a society that sometimes appears progressively more critical of diversity, there is a glaring problematic aspect of identity politics that is often ignored or disregarded—gender sensitivity. When watching TV, engaging in normal peer-to-peer conversation, or reading a comics section within a newspaper, one frequently encounters gender comments or statements that are similar to those quoted in the above recorded jokes. In the factual account of gender brutality, one may generally experience a sense of sympathy for the victims involved in the crime committed. However, a majority of readers may regard the jokes as humorous or comedic. Some would argue this type of humor is not harmful and would regard those who do view it as detrimental, as people who are just too sensitive. But facts and research indicate both are bonafide examples of gender bashing. The jokes are female verbal bashing, while the factual incident demonstrates physical gay bashing. Why do certain forms of gender bashing result in laughter, and others result in disapproval, evoke a sympathetic notion, and often a call for action?

What is called into question and must be defined are the two forms of “bashing”, verbal and physical. Also, it is critical to examine how an observer of these forms of bashing reacts when confronted with such action. For a clear and concise definition of “gender bashing”, it proves impossible to find any such listing or reference. However, “bashing” as a singular term is defined as:

“Bashing” – noun
1. An act of beating, whipping, or thrashing.
2. A decisive defeat.
3. Used in combination:
   a. Unprovoked physical assaults against members of a specified group: gay-bashing.
   b. Verbal abuse, as of a group or a nation.

In this definition, the physical and the verbal are differentiated by assault and abuse, respectively. Therefore, it is known that there are two types of bashing; verbal and physical, and these forms can be used in combination with any words describing a category or group of people. Gender bashing is therefore the verbal abuse or physical assault among the male and female genders. Other forms of bashing include, gay bashing, transgender bashing, and racial bashing. The differentiation between physical and verbal bashing is apparent; however, there is no clear understanding of why society does not react more negatively to those who perpetrate this form of verbal abuse against another. More often than not, most consider it to be far less offensive than its counterpart. Therefore, even if people hear verbal bashing, most remain silent in response. They might claim their silence is a form of protest, but this is not true. Silence is an enabler, only re-enforcing to the perpetrator that they may repeat this behavior again and again.

Read through the following gender and ethnic related jokes. Are these offensive and/or derogatory?

Ethnic:
Q. Why do Mexicans drive low-riders?
A. So they can pick lettuce while they drive.
Q. Why are Asians so small?
A. So you can fit more of them in a factory. ¹

Gender:
Q. What do men and beer have in common?
A. They’re both empty from the neck up. ¹

Q. What does a man consider a seven-course meal?
A. A hot dog and a six-pack of beer. ¹

The ethnic quips are categorized as racial bashing, also known as racial slurs. In our society, these specific slurs validate a long history of socioeconomic oppression, discrimination, and dehumanization in a comedic light. While the second group of witticisms are examples of gender bashing. Regardless of ethnicity, these jokes deem all men as humans that lack class, intellect, and reason. Why is it when an ethnic group is dehumanized, there is a more negative response in comparison to just verbally bashing a gender? Consider the reaction if we modified the gender jokes to also target an ethnic community rather than a specific gender. Read through the following alternative questions with ethnicity interjected.

Q. What do Black men and beer have in common?
Q. What do Asian men and beer have in common?
Q. What do Mexican men and beer have in common?
A. They’re both empty from the neck up. ¹

By adding the word Black, Asian, or Mexican (ethnic) before men (gender), some readers might claim this is offensive? What changed? It is the same joke with only one word added. Why does its meaning become more offensive to a group than the first?

Do not interpret the intent of this article as the un-justification of the offensive nature. The intent of this article is to promote an awareness of when words become harmful, even when they might be masked as comedy. When the meaning cross over from comic to bashing? It is crucial that students challenge perpetrators of such joke telling, as well as those who listen with a “laid-back” behavior that connotes an acceptance. Those who are quietly listening may be appalled to think of themselves as a gender basher because they would never tell such a joke. However, their silence loudly proclaims their acceptance of verbal bashing. All must consider why is the verbal bashing of one specific ethnic community a greater offense vs. the verbal bashing of an entire gender?

If greater sensitivity were established within the context of gender issues through education, family of origin, and positive community support, would it lessen the lack of sensitivity among issues of race/ethnicity and sexuality? Through the exploration of gender performativity, and gender role construction, the following will expose a socio-cultural construction of a gender hierarchy. This hierarchy creates a cyclical acceptance of gender bashing, thus establishing a comedic and humorous approach to verbal forms of gender bashing vs. offensive reactions, such as those in response to racial slurs, and physical forms of bashing.

The Cycle Begins
Many scholars have explored gendering processes, stating development of gender roles has its origins beginning immediately, or even before, birth. Early education provides a space in which children are exposed to methods of gendering. However, one must question, who constitutes the correct and incorrect gender performance during these stages of development?

In recent years, emphasis has been placed on not defining gender by roles and gender characteristics. However, elementary school teachers are still confronted with such gender formation. Often parents influence their children to choose gender “appropriate” colors and types of clothing to wear and to participate in “gender appropriate” activities. Sometimes these values are reinforced by the child’s formal education away from home. For example, though the boy may desire to play in the company of his female classmates, with a child-size kitchen set, ironing board, and baby dolls, he is taught that these specific activities are for “girls only”. Instead, the boy is persuaded to play outside with “the boys” in such aggressive activities as playing with toy soldiers, cars, trucks and/or playing the roles of his favorite action heroes.

Thus from babyhood into early childhood, many males and females are socialized as a product of parental and teacher gender performance desires. Alison Mine, a student teacher in the Long Beach Unified School District, Long Beach, CA, observed her supervising teacher discouraging a young male student from playing with the Barbie dolls. When he resisted her attempts to persuade, the student teacher relates that her supervising instructor physically escorted the youngster away from his female playmates and placed him in amongst the boys, whereupon she warned him he must stay there and not return to the girls. (Alison Mine, personal communication, April 12, 2007).

Michael Messner observes similar situations of gender role reinforcement in his study of children within youth soccer leagues. Within the simple task of choosing team names and colors, several girl teams were issued pink uniforms, while not a single boy team was issued pink colors.³ Notice the color pink is usually associated as a feminine color. In the choosing of team names, Messner classified the names into three categories; Sweet Names which communicate small stature, cuteness, and/or vulnerability, such as Barbie Girls, Blue Butterflies, and Sunflowers; Neutral/Paradoxical Names which carry no obvious gendered meaning, such as, Team Flubber, and Galaxy; and Power Names which invoke images of unambiguous strength, aggression,
and raw power, such as Shooting Stars, Killer Whales, and Raptor Attack. In his analysis, Messner states that 35 out of 40, four-to-seven year old boy’s teams chose Power Names, and only 2 out of 12 girl’s teams, in the same age category, chose Power Names.

In addition to these “gender appropriate” team names and colors, Messner also illustrates a gender bashing atmosphere during the soccer leagues opening ceremonies, as he describes one particular team, the Sea Monsters, and their reaction to the celebratory actions of a girl team, called the Barbie Girls. Messner States, “…with side-glances, some of the boys begin to notice each other’s attention on the Barbie Girls. Their faces begin to show signs of distaste. One male team member yells, ‘NO BARBIE!’ Suddenly, they all begin to move—jumping up and down, nudging and bumping one other—and join into a group chanting, ‘NO BARBIE! NO BARBIE!’” What is significant about this episode? As the boys were yelling, they received their parents’ acceptance, approval, and encouragement to continue these behaviors. Despite the gender role conforming nature of the team colors/names and the gender bashing actions of the opening ceremonies, Messner states the parents watched the whole scenes with rapt attention with smiles, and conversations of approval among other adults and parents.

Gender bashing appears to be accepted by parents when it follows their belief system. For instance, if a child refuses to behave in a manner corresponding to the parents’ gendered desires, the response is one of dissatisfaction and disapproval. Sociologist Emily Kane explores the testimonies of thirty-one parents of sons, stating the gender expectations differed between mothers and fathers. Both parents expressed approval with their sons’ interest in domestic abilities, primarily the desire to play with child-size kitchen sets. Parents claimed these behaviors were in line with their beliefs about the importance of nurturing and empathy—qualities they would encourage their sons to obtain. However, the differences among the father’s approval of their son’s gender performance differed in reference to other behaviors. Kane states that parents react negatively in response to items, activities, or attributes considered feminine traits. This includes color choices for clothing, a desire to wear girl’s clothing, play with nail polish, and wear makeup, excessive emotionality, passivity, and fear of homosexuality. What was interesting about Kane’s study was the lack of concern among the gender non-conformity among daughters. Kane reveals mothers and fathers often celebrated gender non-conformity among their young daughters, reporting the enjoyment of dressing them in sports-themed clothing, and purchasing toy cars, trucks, trains, among other items typical for little boys. Why are stricter gender boundaries more prevalent among male children than female children? The following will explore greater external societal forces encouraging the disapproval and stigmatization of gender non-conformity.

Feeding the Cycle

Is this parental desire of socialized gender performativity a conscious action? Scholars suggest gender is not primarily an identity or role that is taught in childhood, to be continually re-enacted in family relations. Instead, gender is an institutionalized system of social practices for constituting people as two significantly different categories, men and women, and organizing social relations of inequality on the basis of the difference. Therefore, the socialization of children by parents and other figures is not a conscious act in the part of these actors. The socialization becomes a result of the gender norms constructed and enforced institutionally by the larger society.

As our society progresses into an advanced technological age, the advance of media industries becomes increasingly present as emerging forms of advertisements immerse our culture. This factor is extremely crucial, as media has become our common culture, offering us tools in the construction and production of our modern identities. The way in which various products are advertised on television and presented in magazines and newspapers becomes a significant influential factor towards societal accepted gender characteristics. The way gender is accomplished and sustained is through every day practices, including an almost constant interaction with media. However, in this age of a media immersed society, people have become conscious consumers, engaging in critical analysis to which products they consume. Though many become critical consumers in the tangible, physical, and material market, how many from this consumer pool are conscious about subliminal messages pertaining to gender performance embedded in these media venues?

Gender Bashing in the Media

Many television viewers are unaware of the various forms of gender bashing present in television sitcoms, commercials, and talk shows. With comedy shows such as MAD TV, Saturday Night Live, The Man Show, Married with Children, The Simpsons, and South Park, viewers today are bombarded with gender bashing messages. Such messages are evidenced in the show’s content. The Man Show presents men boasting of their hyper-masculinity, as well as featuring skinny, big-breasted models dancing in the backgrounds. On the sitcom Married with Children, the relationship dynamic between Al and Peggy fuels this gender hierarchy as he repeatedly treats her as a subordinate, constantly referring to their sexual life. Their daughter as portrayed by Christina Applegate’s characterization is a “dumb blonde,” primarily concerned with having sex with random men. What is this show doing for the identity and perception of women in our society?

Various, not-so-obvious forms of gender bashing are present in media advertisements. These bashings are embedded in the forms of representation and content within the advertisement.
Danielle Miller of University of Wales explores this issue in a cosmetic line produced by Clinique Laboratories:®

“The ‘Clinique® for Men’ [advertisement] screams simplicity. The bottle is the main focal point on the page. The writing on the bottle is big and bold...what you see is what you get. There is no angle on the camera, and the color of the bottle implies that this is a manly thing to buy, as it is not a ‘girly’ color, and there is no make-up jargon to confuse the buyer.”

Miller then compares the men’s product with the women’s line. The advertisement for the women’s line contains greater content versus the picture of a simple bottle of men’s product. Miller states,

“[First] we see the cute furry chick. Then we read the Clinique® label, and then read the ‘visible skin renewer.’ We now have associated the cute furry animal with the aim of the [advertisement]. If we were to use this gel, we would show visible signs of looking younger. The last line of writing on the tub is an interesting one. It reads ‘action rénovatrice visible.’

Women in general have a habit of believing that once French is used to describe a cosmetic, its credibility is somewhat higher than any other.”

The simplicity of the men’s product line and the embedded messages within the women’s product line serves as a critique of mental traits between men and women. The simple product appearance of the men’s line indicates Clinique® assumes men are not swayed by subterfuge. Reaffirming that men are straightforward, less interested in exterior appearance, style and presentation. This presumption is based on no known facts, but instead on what society dictates men to be, as individuals who desire simplicity. People who prefer to use products that are easy and non-complicated. While to the contrary, the female skin renewer is advertised with layered meanings. The women’s product implies the importance and significance for women to strive to look younger. By photographing a baby chick atop the product, connotes a symbol of innocence and youth. No such symbolic message appears with the male product. This exemplifies how companies devaluate certain genders through the venues of media advertising. For advertising, companies promote images that convince individual consumers to believe they have problems. A woman may appear to be beautiful without make-up products. The advertisement brainwashes a consumer to believe she is not as youthful as she thinks she is, comparing her image to the unattainable goal of a couple-days-old baby chick.

Children and adolescent teenagers are also affected by embedded images within the media. Research specifies that gender roles and occupations are set in television shows and advertisements. Media favored by teenage girls often contain stereotypical messages about appearance, relationships, and careers; relationships however, are often more idealized for women versus men. This becomes a problem, as statistic show children and teenagers watch over 20,000 television advertisements per year, adding up to between 150 and 200 hours of advertisement time. Gender role stereotypes are also presented in commercials. It is significant to highlight gender role stereotypes found in commercials aimed at children, such as:

• Commercials with boy models only were found to feature more away from home settings.
• Commercials with girl models only were more likely to be set in the home.
• Only boys were shown in anti-social behavior.
• Girls in commercials show only socially acceptable behavior.
• Boys are shown using more products and in different activities.

Completing the Cycle
Gender stereotypes, the promotion of gender role conformity, and institutional forms of gender bashing all connect and contribute to the larger cycle beginning at childbirth. With institutional forms of gender oppression, such as histories of gender inequalities and glass ceilings in the workforce, combined with large amounts of subliminal messages embedded in media advertising, our society at large participates in a cycle of absorbing messages and sustaining norms promoting distinct gender roles. These venues perpetuate how a man must act, what he must do, and how he must live in order to live truly as a man. The same venues similarly constitute how women must do the same to achieve and live in true womanhood. In mainstream society, we have embedded in our history the theories of the nuclear family. We assume that a normal man acts in a sole role of the patriarch, acting as a sole provider, protector, and designator of decisions. The woman is expected to act as the matriarch, acting as the leader within the domestic sphere. One must begin to question, who designated these roles? Who made the decision that men must be masculine and women must be feminine?

The problem of these embedded norms within our society is that it ultimately acts as the basis of all gender bashing jokes, comments, and actions mentioned earlier in this article. The reason why we laugh at jokes targeted at effeminate men or masculine women is because it appears to be different from the norm; thus, many react in a humorous response.
And even though some may assert they would never gender bash, they become an extension of this action by remaining silent when in the presence of others who are doing so through the telling of one of these jokes. Just as the subject of the jokes are being singled out, no one wishes to step forward and possibly “stand alone” by saying that he/she feels the joke is inappropriate. It takes courage to step outside of the societal norm. Do not confuse this form of humor as being a harmless form of “fun”. Even though these jokes may not cause physical pain, their emotional effects on those targeted are debilitating.

Breaking the Cycle

Despite the presence of these established gender norms, there are specific methods that can be used to break this cycle. Dr. Linda Kekelis, a gender equality educator, suggests the following steps:

1. In early childhood, allow children to play with a variety of toys and games. Do not stress girls play with dolls and boys play with building blocks, toy autos and trucks. Allow the children to explore their interests as individuals not based upon or defined by their gender.

2. Encourage children to have playmates of both genders. This encourages girls and boys to develop mutual respect and camaraderie through shared experiences.

3. Provide opportunities for children to interact with others from many varied cultures. Observations across different cultures reveal that girls and boys are more likely to play together with less teasing when they are in mixed-age groups.

These proceeding suggestions can be applied to our lives as adults. Read through the following check list in relation to your own immediate circle of friends. After honestly answering these questions, can you declare yourself as “gender unbiased”? After some further contemplation, it may be time to make some changes and/or different choices for patterns of behavior, attitude, and outlook.

CSULB Student Check List

- Do you have friends of the opposite sex, friends of different sexual orientation, and friends of different ethnic backgrounds?
- Do you ever find yourself with a friend or in a group when inappropriate gender bashing jokes are made? And up until this time, what was your reaction? Did you remain silent? Did you inform them that you found their remarks inappropriate and why?
- Assess your own bias. Review past actions taken towards the opposite sex, those of different sexual orientations, and/or ethnic backgrounds. In your thoughts and comments, have you always been accepting and supporting or have you participated in perpetrating some form of gender bashing?

By fostering sensitivity among our younger generations, we can assure a future with less gender bashing. The best method of encouraging gender sensitivity today is to challenge norms, and to speak freely about gender issues. The next time you hear a joke bashing a specific gender, make your voice heard and say it was offensive. If people say you were over reactive, then so be it; you may have inspired at least one or two people in the room. Knowledge can spread like wildfire. On the next occasions you view a product, a commercial, or any other type of media communication bashing a specific gender, do not support the company, and tell your friends about it. By spreading social and gender consciousness, we can break cycles, break stigmas, deconstruct hierarchies, and (re)construct a society free of all types of bashing, discrimination, and inequality.

References

4. Kane EW. “No way are my boys going to be like that!” Parents’ responses to children’s gender nonconformity. Gender & Society. April 2006; 20(2), 149-176.
Stalking is repeated harassing or threatening behavior carried out by one person against another. This negative behavior is exhibited through direct physical contact or indirectly by watching the victim through a camera lens or telescope, communicating via phone, and/or written correspondence such as the postal system or internet (cyber-stalking). Stalkers are sometimes strangers, but more frequently are persons known to the victim, such as a classmate, an ex-boyfriend/girlfriend, or an ex-husband or wife. Often, victims hesitate in taking action against their aggressors because they assume if they show no interest, the stalker will stop. But the victim’s response bears little relevance to preventing the threatening behavior, thus making the victim powerless in dissolving this adverse relationship.

On March 30th 1981, John Hinckley Jr. attempted to assassinate President Reagan by targeting him as he got out of his car. Mr. Hinckley approached the car, aimed and fired six shots, one bullet hitting President Reagan. Unlike most assassination attempts, John’s was completely unrelated to politics. John shot President Reagan in an attempt to impress actress Jodie Foster. Mr. Hinckley’s inspiration was the film Taxi Driver in which Jodie Foster plays a 12-year-old prostitute who is saved by a taxi driver, played by Robert DeNiro. Obsessed with the film, viewing it more than 15 times, John became infatuated with Jodie Foster and moved to New Haven, Connecticut to be closer to her, as she was attending Yale. He desired a relationship with her, and he even enrolled in an English writing class on the campus. Repeatedly harassing Foster, he slipped notes and poems into her mailbox and eventually contacted her via the phone. John assured her he was not dangerous, but became frustrated when she refused contact with him. In a cry for attention, John resolved to take action similar to that of the main character in Taxi Driver. He hoped Jodie would respond favorably to him, just as she had in her acting role to Robert DeNiro’s character. It was delusional thinking, but in Mr. Hinckley’s mind, it all was sane. Before committing what he considered to be a valiant act, he wrote this letter.

Dear Jodie, There is a definite possibility that I will be killed in my attempt to get Reagan. It is for this very reason that I am writing you this letter now.

As you well know by now I love you very much. Over the past seven months, I’ve left you dozens of poems, letters and love messages in the faint hope that you could develop an interest in me. Although we talked on the phone a couple of times, I never had the nerve to simply approach you and introduce myself. Besides my shyness, I honestly did not wish to bother you with my constant presence. I know the many messages left at your door and in your mailbox were a nuisance, but I felt that it was the most painless way for me to express my love for you.

I feel very good about the fact that you at least know my name and know how I feel about you. And by hanging around your dormitory, I’ve come to realize that I’m the topic of more than a little conversation, however fall of ridicule it may be. At least you know that I’ll always love you.

Jodie, I would abandon this idea of getting Reagan in a second if I could only win your heart and live out the rest of my life with you, whether it be in total obscurity or whatever.

I will admit to you that the reason I’m going ahead with this attempt now is because I just cannot wait any longer to impress you. I’ve got to do something now to make you understand, in no uncertain terms, that I am doing all of this for your sake! By sacrificing my freedom and possibly my life, I hope to change your mind about me. This letter is being written only an hour before I leave for the Hilton Hotel. Jodie, I’m asking you to please look into your heart and at least give me the chance, with this historical deed, to gain your respect and love. I love you forever,

John Hinckley.

Jodie Foster, as a victim, suffered not only from John Hinckley’s endless harassment, but from the aftermath of his shocking action. Years after the shooting, Jodie described her tenuous emotional state. “My body jerked in painful convulsions. I hurt. I was no longer thinking of the President, of the assailant, of the crime, of the press. I was crying for me, the unwilling victim.” After his arrest, John Hinckley was acquitted by reason of insanity. The jury ruled that he was not rational enough to be convicted of his crime. Upon hearing of his acquittal, Jodie Foster suffered a relapse of the psychological trauma she had suffered immediately after the shooting.

Celebrity stalking draws much media attention, but pursuing the not-so-famous receives little. Stalking includes patterns of harassment, causing psychological distress to the victim. The largest meta-analysis focused on stalking compiled studies from 103 different sources representing 70,000 participants. Data gathered indicate that on average 23.5% of women and 10.5% of men have been stalked for an average of two years. In 1998, a study found that adults between the ages of 18 and 29 were the primary victims of stalking making up 52% of the results. For college students, stalking rates are higher; research indicates that 27% of females and 15% of males reported being stalked. While these numbers seem high, many think the real statistics could be even greater. “Victims report only about half of stalking incidents to the police. Generally, many victims think the police can’t help them or fear that reporting will make the stalker even more dangerous.” Only when the harassment intensifies do victims consider seeking help. While most cases will not be as high profile as Jodie Foster’s, stalking may come to affect us, either directly or to someone we know.
IS IT STALKING?

Every single day
Every word you say
Every game you play
Every night you stay
I’ll be watching you

Stalking has likely always existed within human societies. When does a simple obsession cross the line? Is it the first time the perpetrator shows up at the house, uninvited, at 3:00 a.m. or when the phone must be disconnected because it continuously rings with unwanted calls? Stalking is defined as pursuing prey in a stealthy manner. Other definitions refer to stalking as obsessive relational intrusion, “repeated and unwanted pursuit and invasion of one’s sense of physical or symbolic privacy by another person, either stranger or acquaintance, who desires and/or presumes an intimate relationship.” It is critical to remember that unwanted is defined by the victim, not the stalker.

Thus in early stages of stalking, one may confuse a stalker’s actions for those of someone initiating a romantic relationship. The pursuer might send letters and flowers or begin making daily contact by phone and/or e-mail. However, it is the receiver of these actions that defines the behavior as stalking if these actions are unwanted. One study broadly defines stalking as “intrusive contact,” but not to be mistaken for simply being pursued by someone he/she does not find desirable. In that situation, one could not claim they were being stalked. The difference between stalking and unwanted pursuit behavior (UPB) is that while UPB may be annoying, stalking makes the victim feel fearful.

Stalking is not however limited within a romantic context. Stalkers may want to form an intimate relationship with someone they admire, such as a celebrity. The relationship between stalking and mere annoyingly persistent romantic pursuit is a relatively fine line and makes the definition of stalking problematic. Many stalkers may not be aware that they are scaring their victims. “Pursuers sense they are engaging in distal behaviors that have little impact on the target, whereas targets perceive them as invasive.” Stalkers may rationalize their attention as normal or even desired. This form of denial is often exhibited by delusional stalkers. For them, even a direct response of “NO” can be rationalized as a positive and ignored.

The vast majority of stalking incidents arise from prior acquaintances, 75%, whereas only 25% are from strangers, and 50% of stalking cases emerge after a relationship has ended. These higher percentages are partly due to the manner in which victims handle the dissolution of a relationship. Research indicates that mixed signals between individuals can further prolong negative interactions or stalking behavior. Therefore, it is important to avoid common mistakes that might confusedly encourage stalking behavior.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

1. Not listening to your intuition. Rely on your internal radar to pick up signals that something might be wrong.

2. Letting someone down easy, instead of saying a definitive “NO” if you’re not interested in a relationship. Trying to be nice can lead a potentially obsessive suitor to hear what he or she wants, instead of the message that you’re not interested.

3. Responding to a stalker in any way, shape, or form. That means not acceding to your stalker’s demands.

4. Trying to reason or bargain with a stalker.

5. Expecting the police to solve your problem and make it go away.

6. Taking inadequate privacy and safety precautions.

7. Neglecting to enlist the support of family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, therapists and other victims. It may be tough to admit that you’re being stalked, but that’s not your fault.

8. Do not ignore your emotional needs during and after stalking.

These common mistakes are often a result of not wishing to offend the stalker, hoping to spare his/her feelings. Often the victim places priority on the stalker’s well-being, rather than on his/her own safety. By the victim denying a problem exists, the stalker is encouraged to continue his/her unwanted actions. When a stalker breaks through any boundary, he/she presses for more contact. The victim must adamantly communicate any further attempts at a relationship are futile.

Stalking Categories

Current research holds that most stalking cases fall into specific categories as defined by the U.S. Department of Justice guidelines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organized</th>
<th>Delusional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The relationship between the stalker and the victim is characterized by one-way anonymous communication from stalker to victim. The stalker is methodical and calculating.</td>
<td>The relationship between the stalker and the victim is based solely on the stalker’s psychological fixation on the victim. The stalker is delusional and falsely believes he or she has a relationship or other connection with the victim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple Obsession Stalking</td>
<td>Erotophobia Stalking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is the most common type. The stalker is usually a male, and the victim an ex-spouse, ex-lover, or former boss. The stalking sometimes results from the stalker feeling the victim has mistreated him or her. In intimate relationships, the stalking frequently begins before the breakup.</td>
<td>The stalker falsely believes that the victim is in love with him or her, and they are only kept apart because of some external obstacle or interference. The victim may be rich or famous, or in a position of power. In this situation, the stalker could also pose a great risk to those close to the victim.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Forms of stalking can be categorized by degrees of intimacy. **Intimate relationships** are defined as a former relationship existing between the stalker and the victim. Often in these relationships there is a history of abuse, such as domestic violence. If the victim chooses to end the relationship, the perpetrator may seek to reestablish a connection/interaction. This attempt to reconnect is motivated by the stalker’s desire for control over the victim. They may attempt to bribe or threaten the victim into a relationship. Therefore, an abusive mate is more likely to engage in stalking than a non-abusive mate.

**Non-intimate relationships** are ones in which the stalker has no interpersonal relationship with the victim. However, he/she may know the victim. Perhaps, they were co-workers or the stalker was a customer, both acceptable situations that allow an individual to have repeated access to the victim. In the stalker’s imagination only, the non-intimate stalker becomes infatuated with the victim. Having no true relationship, the stalker plays out fantasies with their “chosen one,” in hopes that their make-believe relationship will become reality. Many stalkers carry psychological problems, making it even more difficult to accept reality and rational thinking. Often during initial interactions, the victims cannot discern any danger. Frighteningly, by the time the victim experiences fear, the stalker has become permanently lodged in his/her life.

**Diversity of Stalking Cases**

Oh can’t you see  
You belong to me  
How my poor heart aches  
With every step you take  
**I’ll be watching you**

Stalking is a behavior that can manifest itself in many ways. Generally speaking, the profile of a stalker is a middle age man; and in 80% of the cases, the person being stalked is a woman. However, stalking is engaged in by males and females from teenagers to elders, including all sexual orientations.

**Relational Stalking**

Intimate stalking is not limited to relationships, but extends to married couples. The closeness of the relationship may increase the likelihood of stalking. “Research indicates that 81% of women stalked by an intimate have been physically assaulted by that person.”\(^{13}\) Physical assaults and stalking are very closely related because of the linkage of control. The stalker seeks to control the victim by monitoring them. When they feel the victim has done something to upset him/her, he/she uses violence to regain control of the victim. “In cases involving intimate partners, 21% of victims surveyed reported that stalking occurred during the relationship, 36% reported that it occurred both during and after the relationship, and 43% reported that it started after the relationship.”\(^{16}\) A very high proportion of stalking cases take place after the relationship ends, perhaps because the stalker hopes to force the victim back into a relationship. An indicator of possible stalking behavior is if the partner displays feelings of jealousy during the relationship. A 2002 study revealed that victims of relationship stalking were more likely to report a former partner who was jealous of his/her relationship with others.\(^{14}\)

**Cyber Stalking**

In recent years, cyber stalking is on the increase. Individuals who might not engage in physical stalking can be considered stalkers because he/she harasses online and can easily hide his/her identities over the Internet. “Anonymity leaves the cyber stalker in an advantageous position.”\(^{15}\) Anonymity allows the stalker to act out his/her desires without perceived repercussions, engaging in behaviors he/she would not enact in person.

Cyber stalking is harder to prosecute because the stalker could be anywhere, in another state or country. Therefore, local authorities are unable to investigate the incident.\(^{14}\) Online resources provide stalkers with valuable information, aiding them in his/her pursuits. “Numerous websites will provide personal information, including unlisted telephone numbers and detailed directions to a home or office. For a fee, other websites promise to provide social security numbers, financial data, and other personal information.”\(^{14}\) Information presumed private is openly traded over the Internet, often for a fee. Everyone should be careful about information they post about themselves.

**Same Gender Stalking**

Stalking is not always between opposite genders; it can also occur in a same gender context. However, the perpetrators still largely remain male. Therefore, gay men find themselves being stalked by another male. In these cases, the victims are more reluctant than women to go to the authorities or seek help from others. These men may fear other members of society who are homophobic or may fear being "outed" as a gay man.
Disclosure of his sexuality to others may endanger his relationship with family members, friends, landlords, co-workers, or employers. With these additional social constraints gay men are less likely to find the same amount of support from their social circle and from authorities.

One study indicated that stalking prevalence was significantly greater among men who had ever lived with a man as a couple, compared with men who had never lived with a man as a couple.4 In these intimate relationships, the perpetrator’s attachment may be deeper than if the victim had not lived with him. “Urban gay men are as likely to be battered as heterosexual women.”16 This trend generally follows what is consistent with heterosexual relationships. If the relationship was previously abusive, the chance the victim would be stalked afterwards is increased. The causes for stalking in heterosexual relationships are the same as same sex relationships. Therefore, the same guidelines should be followed for same sex victims to end stalking behavior. The tragic difference in these situations is that same sex victims fear the stalker as well as the possible discrimination from those they disclose to when seeking help.13

Stalking Behaviors

Since you’ve gone I been lost without a trace
I dream at night I can only see your face
I look around but it’s you I can’t replace
I feel so cold and I long for your embrace
I keep crying baby, baby please

Oh can’t you see
you belong to me . . .

Every move you make
Every vow you break
Every smile you fake
Every claim you stake
I’ll be watching you1

The stalker becomes obsessed with the life of his/her victim. In response to their obsession, their actions become the stalking. The National Center for Victims of Crime records, “Stalking creates uncertainty, instills fear and can completely disrupt lives. It can involve severe-even lethal-violence. Stalking involves a pattern of overtly criminal and/ or apparently innocent behavior that makes victims fear for themselves or others.”13 The stalker often plays down the detrimental effects his/her behavior has on the victim. To clarify what is considered stalking, the following criminal and legal actions are compiled.

What becomes confusing is that unlike other crimes, which normally consist of a single illegal act, stalking is a series of actions that when considered individually may be perfectly legal. Stalking is a pattern of behavior in which the victim becomes fearful or emotionally distressed. Perceived harmless activities such as receiving telephone calls become distressing for the victim if the calls are coming in 20 times a day.

U.S. legislation generally depicts stalking as “an intentional pattern of repeated or unwanted pursuit that a ‘reasonable person’ would consider threatening or fear inducing.”17 Criminal acts may be prosecuted at any time; however, common acts can only be prosecuted when the victim feels afraid or fearful.17 Stalking is very difficult to prove in a court of law. To convict a person of stalking the victim has to prove that the perpetrator had the intention of making the victim fearful. The court system is also very ineffective in dealing with stalkers when they issue restraining orders. Regrettably, in 70% of all restraining orders obtained, the stalkers violate again. Also, data gathered finds stalking victims were more likely to credit the cessation of their stalker’s actions due to informal police interventions such as police warnings, not from a formal justice system interventions.5 Court orders will not stop a stalker from being psychologically obsessed with the victim.

How Victims Suffer

Every move you make
Every step you take
I’ll be watching you

Victims not only suffer from the terror of being hunted, but from other psychological and physical ailments. Symptoms from being stalked can last long after the actions against them have ceased. Some survivors claim they never fully recover. Prolonged symptoms impact health and result in extreme forms of stress.
Stalking Victim / Survivor Symptoms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychological Effects</th>
<th>Physical Effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Denial and self doubt</td>
<td>• Sleep disturbances, nightmares, flashbacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Insecurity, low self-esteem</td>
<td>• Problems with intimacy/sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Frustration, anger, irritability</td>
<td>• Lethargy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Anxiety, fear, being easily startled</td>
<td>• Digestive problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Emotional numbness</td>
<td>• Dermatological breakouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Feeling suicidal</td>
<td>• Dizziness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Depression, shame and embarrassment</td>
<td>• Self medication with drugs and alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Guilt, self-blame</td>
<td>• Low concentration levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Isolation and disconnection from others</td>
<td>• Phobias and panic attacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A loss of interest in enjoyable activities</td>
<td>• Fluctuations in weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A loss of trust in others</td>
<td>• Headaches</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survivors/victims suffer from multiple psychological and physical ailments. For some, the experience is devastating. “The level of trauma experienced by stalking victims is suggested by a study of Dutch stalking victims: 59% reported symptoms comparable to those reported in samples of victims of generally recognized traumata… very similar to the proportion recently reported among victims of the Boeing 737-2D6C crash in Coventry.18” Severe cases of stalking can even result in a condition called Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).18 People with PTSD can have reoccurring memories of their ordeal, becoming numb to life around them, experiencing severe fatigue and depression.

Pro-active Prevention Steps Taken Against Stalkers

It is critical to not be watched by someone against our wishes, safety, and best interest. However, even more critical is to not remain silent when these actions are taken against us. Often the solution to stalking may lie outside of the justice system, and require the victim to be proactive about his/her own safety. Stalking is asserting control over another. One way to control is to isolate the victim, causing him/her to remain silent because he/she feels afraid and/or ashamed. Victims/survivors must reach out, making others aware of their situation. Do not keep secrets about what is happening. Keeping the situation hidden will never bring resolution to the problem.

By defining our own personal safety, we can follow steps to maintain risk awareness, risk reduction, risk recognition and risk avoidance.20 Ask neighbors to be on the look-out for anyone hanging around our house and if they notice anything unusual to call us. And if we are not at home, ask the neighbors to contact the police. Require individuals who knock at our front door to orally identify themselves before we open the door. Be sure there is adequate outdoor lighting when walking to our homes or at other outdoor venues such as theaters, shopping malls, and schools. Ask a friend or family member to accompany us whenever possible. Never walk or jog alone at night. Get an unlisted phone number and limit the number of people to whom it is given. Law enforce-

For someone in imminent danger, the primary goal of a victim should be to locate a safe place. Safety for stalking victims can often be found in the following locations:

• Police Stations
• Residences of family/friends (location unknown to perpetrators)
• Domestic violence shelters or local churches
• Public areas (stalkers may be less inclined toward violence or creating disturbance in public places)
• If being followed in your car, head to a public areas (shopping mall parking lot, university parking lot) and begin honking the horn repeatedly until someone comes to your aid21

For a woman, taking a self-defense course is an excellent proactive step towards protecting oneself. “Defense education increases awareness and provides a deeper understanding of one’s potential.”20 Female CSULB students can sign up for an on-campus defense class, Rape Aggression Defense (R.A.D.) class through the University Police. Call (562) 985-8538 for further information.

Concluding Resolutions

Taking responsibility for your own safety should be top priority. “Even with protective orders, 69% of female and 81% of male victims reported that their stalkers had violated the order.”4 While we like to think that the police can stop every instance of crime, this is just not so. Some readers of this article may already have been or are currently victims of a stalker. They understand this threat. Remember there are locations on campus to seek assistance and support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Police</th>
<th>911 or (562) 985-4101</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Health Services</td>
<td>(562) 985-1732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Resource Center</td>
<td>(562) 985-8576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling &amp; Psychological Services</td>
<td>(562) 985-4001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local off-campus 24-hour hotlines providing counseling, advocacy, information and referrals are:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interval House Domestic Violence</td>
<td>(562) 891-8121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Assault Crisis Agency, Long Beach</td>
<td>(562) 989-5900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalking Hotline</td>
<td>(562) 633-0044</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since it is impossible to control other peoples’ behaviors, we must look to ourselves and take actions towards protecting ourselves against stalkers.
Always keep in mind to go with your “gut” feeling in response to a seemingly minor annoyance or a semi-harassing letter, email, voice mail or social interaction. As evidenced again and again, all stalking begins with a first step which all too often appears harmless. Remember a minor annoyance or a threatening letter can turn tragic quickly. Do not allow someone else’s obsession to overshadow the course of your life. Take action against someone observing:

Every move you make  
Every step you take  
I’ll be watching you

References


Setting the Truth Free: Know the Facts about Intimate Partner Violence
Antonya Jackson

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) affects all people, no matter their gender, ethnicity, and/or sexual orientation; however, data collected indicate that women are more often victimized. This fact not only holds true today, but in centuries past in which specific laws were created granting men legal rights to abuse females. Not only does IPV affect women and men, but children exposed to this destructive behavior become prone to violence and victimization. Often the victim is judged harshly because he/she does not step away from the abusive relationship. Research indicates victims are emotionally caught in a cycle of violence, one in which they will remain forever, unless they can break the harmful chain of events.

**Domestic violence**, what is it? Sometimes referred to as Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), domestic violence is defined as “abuse that occurs between two people in a close relationship.”

Abuse includes, but is not limited to physical, sexual, or psychological harm by a current or former partner or spouse and occurs among heterosexual or same-sex couples and does not require sexual intimacy. Other signs of IPV include, “isolation, intimidation, threats, withholding of necessary resources such as money or transportation, and abuse of the children, other relatives, or even pets.”

IPV includes four types of behavior:

1. **Physical abuse** is when a person hurts or tries to hurt a partner by hitting, kicking, burning, or inflicting other forms of physical force.

2. **Sexual abuse** is forcing a partner to take part in a sex act when the partner does not consent.

3. **Verbal abuse** is threats of physical or sexual abuse that include the use of words, gestures, weapons, or other means which convey an intent to cause harm.

4. **Emotional abuse** is threatening a partner or his or her possessions or loved ones, or harming a partner’s sense of self-worth. Examples are stalking, name-calling, intimidation, or not letting a partner see friends and family.

**Historical IPV Retrospect**

Even though IPV is not gender specific, data collected still indicate it is the most frequent cause of serious injury to women, more than car accidents, muggings, and stranger rapes. Why do women suffer more from IPV? Historically, throughout early civilizations, gender roles were developed as “male” or “female”. Women were limited to household duties and child rearing, while men worked outside the home and earned money for the family. These gender roles created a power structure in which males were established as “heads of the household.” As the patriarch, it was his obligation and right to set forth and uphold certain rules and family standards. And in doing so, it was expected that all family members, especially the females, would abide by his laws. In this role as the male figurehead, some men became domineering. When taken to negative extremes, this type of domination (male over female) can lead to forms of IPV as a misguided attempt to retain control.

Domination describes a social structure in which certain people can determine and limit the spheres of activity of other groups. In 753 B.C. during the reign of Romulus in Rome, wife beating was accepted and condoned under *The Laws of Chastisement*. These laws permitted the husband to beat his wife with a rod or switch as long as its circumference was no greater than the girth of the base of the man’s right thumb, known as “the rule of Thumb”.

Hundreds of years ago under British common law, a man was allowed to chastise his wife with any reasonable instrument. The wife was ruled by her husband; he had the legal right to use force against her in order to ensure that she fulfilled her wifely duties, especially those that were related to sexual obligations which included preservation of conjugal rights, sexual fidelity, and obedience to fulfill and respect all his wishes.

This type of “male over female” control was not only exercised in Europe, but in the United States as well. Court decisions were made condoning the actions of IPV, “… the husband’s right to chastise his wife was upheld in the Supreme Court of Mississippi in 1824.” The court ruled that a husband should be allowed to chastise without being subject to useless prosecution, which would supposedly shame all parties. A North Carolina court ruling in 1864 asserted that the state should not interfere in cases of domestic chastisement, but instead leave the parties to themselves.
to make up, unless there was permanent injury or an excess of violence.9

In a historical overview of wife beating, R. Emerson Dobash and Russell Dobash noted that throughout the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, there was little objection within the community to a husband using force against his wife, as long as he did not exceed certain male accepted societal limits.8 During these times, women were defined as, “becoming the property of a husband, taking a secondary position in a marital hierarchy of power and worth, being legally and morally bound to obey the will and wisdom of one’s husband, and thus, quite logically, subject to his control even to the point of physical chastisement or murder.”7 And even today, some of these views are still upheld and accepted, especially in certain cultures and religions.

IPV Statistics
IPV becomes more of a problem every day, as indicated by increasing incidences amongst different races, economic levels, age, gender, and sexual orientation. Statistics show:

• At least one in four women in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain will experience some form of physical violence perpetrated by either her current or former partners.9

• Each year, women experience about 4.8 million intimate partner related physical assaults and rapes. Men are the victims of about 2.9 million intimate partner related physical assaults. IPV resulted in 1,544 deaths in 2004. Of these deaths, 25% were males and 75% were females.1

• Considered by age category, 1993-98, women ages 16 to 24 experienced the highest per capita rates of intimate violence (19.6 per 1,000 women).10

• Prevalence of IPV varies among race. Ethnic groups at most risk are American Indian/Alaskan Native women and men, African-American women, and Hispanic women.2

• Young women and those below the poverty line are disproportionately victims of IPV.2

Myths about Intimate Partner Violence
Information concerning IPV is not always true. This is why it is important to know the facts about IPV and to disregard the myths. The following are myths:

1. “If he really wanted to stop, he would.”
   This is not always the situation for people that choose to abuse their partner. In some situations, individuals really despise themselves for taking those actions and want to stop, but still carry on with those actions.11

2. “The sons of wife-beaters see how awful things are and grow up to treat women differently.”
   Unfortunately, the past is not always forgotten. In some instances, family history is repeated. This is due to learned behavior within a relationship. Most of the time, individuals develop behavior from parents and carry this behavior with them.11

3. “Spouse abuse is a problem and a product of the lower classes, especially those in poverty.”
   Evaluating the statistics listed above may indicate that a greater percentage of those from lower income groups have been identified as domestic abusers; however, abuse occurs in all socio-economic groups.11

4. “Having a violent parent is better than not having a mother or father at all.”
   Violence against one family member sets all the family relationships off-kilter. The children learn violence and disrespect as a part of life.11

Myth or Truth: Men Are Abused Too
In reviewing the history of IPV, statistics show an alarming rate of women being abused in their relationships. Images in the media support the idea of males being dominant and women being submissive. However, studies denote that women are just as likely as males to participate in IPV. Research on violent women in intimate relationships is far less developed. “For example, the results of the National Family Violence Surveys conducted in the United States (1975, 1985) sparked considerable controversy with the unexpected finding that the annual incidence rates for assault by women on their partners were similar to those of men on their partners.”12 According to Straus and Gelles, “One tradition of research-mainly conducted by family researchers has consistently produced results indicating that women and men use violence at equal rates, and in some cases, women use violence more often.”13, 14 This IPV equality indicates that women do abuse men. A recent study found that men are more likely than women to suffer serious injuries in intimate partner relationships and that those men are actually less likely than women to use violence in intimate relationships.15

For many, the picture of a woman abusing a man might be hard to imagine, considering size, but regardless of stature, anyone can abuse another. Unfortunately, there is a discrepancy on how society treats male and female survivors of IPV. Male victimization is not taken seriously, in part because of the gender paradigm that suggests men should be able to defend themselves and/or a disbelief in female violence.16 One report exemplifying this belief is about a male IPV survivor who suffered stab wounds so deep into his back that they just missed his lungs. When the police arrived, he reported that his wife had stabbed him and he asked that she be removed from the house, but the officers allowed her to remain. They did call for an ambulance for him, but it was officially recorded that they refused formal sanctions against the woman,
including her removal. Indeed, all those who were present in aid of the male victim, reported that the incident was trivialized by the police and that they and the male victim were belittled by the officers. 16, 17

Since “female battering male” incidents are on the rise, it is important for officials to address IPV with equality. Regardless of gender, IPV hurts and affects everyone and should be treated in this manner. Statistics from 1997 -1998 Bureau of Justice Reports show men were victims of about 160,000 violent crimes by an intimate partner. 18 Occurrences in which only the male partner was injured indicate legal inequality. “Females battering males” were only charged in 60.2% of the cases, while “males battering females” were charged in 91.1% of the reported cases. In no-injury circumstances, the male was charged 52.5% of the time, the female 13.2% of the time. 16

Same-Gender Relationships

Accepting the fact that both men and women are victims in heterosexual relationships helps to transition understanding to how IPV exists in homosexual and lesbian relationships. The article, “Battering in Lesbian Relationships,” details how domestic violence takes place in gay and lesbian relationships at approximately the same rate as in heterosexual relationships. It is estimated that between 22% and 46% of lesbians surveyed experienced repeated acts of violence in intimate relationships. 19 In both hetero and homosexual relationships, there are causes for IPV based upon patriarchal role play. “Internalized patriarchal role expectations and norms can be manifested by the exercise of power and control of one partner over the other in intimate relationships between women, and are as much a part of the dynamics of abusive lesbian relationships as abusive heterosexual relationships.” 20 Due to no distinction on gender roles in lesbian and gay relationships, it is clear that patriarchal values and relationships norms can be a negative influence, whether it is between heterosexuals or homosexuals. “Internalization of these values in conjunction with social stressors and intergenerational factors, contributes to the use of violence of all individuals, regardless of gender or sexual orientation.” 21

Unfortunately, lesbian IPV survivors find it difficult to seek help, due to societal stigmas attached to lesbian relationships. Many battered lesbians never seek help; and if they do contact a battered woman’s hotline or shelter, their sexual orientation becomes a stumbling block. Often hotlines, shelters and other support networks do not provide assistance specifically tailored to the needs of a lesbian. A lesbian may feel misunderstood and therefore unable to get the needed help. Due to this lack of understanding, abuse between two women may never be reported. It is feared that many victims never find help.

Who IPV Really Hurts

Not only does IPV affect men and women, it also affects the children. “Children exposed to IPV often exhibit internalizing and externalizing problems, physical problems, and pronounced to violence and victimization.” 22, 23, 24 This is why it is more likely that a child who grows up in an abusive home is at a higher risk for encountering IPV in their home. For example, in one batterer’s rehabilitation program, 70% of participants came from violent homes. Witnessing domestic violence as a child has been identified as the most common risk factor for becoming a batterer in adulthood. 7 Children experiencing IPV in their household learn that IPV is part of their normal family life.

Even though children may consider it a normal occurrence to see their mother and father abuse each other, these incidences harm the child. Children may develop anxiety, deficits in memory, lack of concentration, and sleep disturbances. Also, exposure to violence can interfere with the normal development of trust and with the later emergence of independence through exploration. 25 In witnessing this repeated behavior, children learn that IPV is a way to deal with anger, anxiety, sadness, and cope with problems. By learning this behavior, it is more than likely that they will use it and pass this trait onto their children unless they can break the habit. Children usually favor and repeat the behaviors of their parents, so it is not surprising “…that children in families with IPV are at notably higher risk for becoming the abused or the abuser.” 19

Why Do People Stay in IPV Relationships?

Women and men stay in IPV relationships for multiple reasons. When listed, none of these reasons may seem valid, justified, and/or sane, but to the abused partner, staying seems to be the only option. The abuser justifies his/her reasons for being abusive because the abused has broken promises and must be punished because she/he was acting like a child; “I did it for her/his own good; this beating will teach her/him a lesson.” Some partners are afraid of the physical assaults or the fear of being murdered if they leave. Others are fearful their partner will take the children away or place them in a foster home. Partners who are illegal citizens think there is no place for them to go and will remain in an abusive home.

One study reports, “When women leave violent men, their economic vulnerability and instability often drives them back home. One out of every three female-headed households, as compared to one out of every eighteen male-headed households, is living below the poverty level.” 26 Reasons for women experiencing financial vulnerability are attributed to the fact that many never were afforded an opportunity to work outside the home or to seek higher education. Isolated at home, they believe they are not capable of earning a living.
Because they have little education and work experience their self-esteem is either non-existent or very fragile, thus causing them to illogically hold onto the hope that their partner will change.

Victims and abusers become familiar with a cycle of violence as detailed in the following chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cycle of Violence</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abuse</strong> – The abuser lashes out with aggressive or violent behavior. The abuse is a power play designed to show the victim “who is the boss”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guilt</strong> – After the abusive episode, the abuser feels guilt, but not over what has been done to the victim. The guilt is over the possibility of being caught and facing consequences.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rationalization or excuses</strong> – The abuser rationalizes what was done. He/she may come up with a string of excuses or blame the victim for his/her own abusive behavior – anything to shift responsibility from the abuser.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>“Normal” behavior</strong> – The abuser does everything he/she can to regain control and keep the victim in the relationship. He/she may act as if nothing has happened, or the abuser may turn on the charm. This peaceful honeymoon phase may give the victim hope that the abuser has really changed this time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fantasy and planning</strong> – The abuser begins to fantasize about abusing the victim again, spending a lot of time thinking about what he/she has done wrong and how the victim must pay. The abuser makes a plan for turning the abuse fantasy into reality.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Set-up</strong> – The abuser sets up the victim and puts his/her plan in motion, creating a situation where he/she can justify abusing once again. Sometimes there may be no premeditated plan, especially if the abuser has anger issues or is a “rage-aholic”. The victim is traumatized by living in this constant fear.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The Influence of Alcohol in IPV

Recent studies show that “acute alcohol consumption is a contributing cause of marital aggression, and that successful resolution of heavy drinking will often lead to a reduction, and in some cases a cessation, of IPV.” When people are under the influence of alcohol, they lose control of their actions and emotions. Alcohol is likely to contribute to IPV in a variety of ways. Levels of consumption relate to the likelihood and severity of violence. Alcohol appears to be particularly important in escalating existing conflict. As much as 80% of domestic violence takes place when one or both partners have been drinking and increases the extent of negative verbal behavior displayed by the men and their partners.

Usually, low self-esteem can be attributed to both the abuser and the abused. A feeling of powerlessness can cause a person to remain in an abusive relationship, while on the other side it can cause someone to abuse in hopes of regaining power. Initially, alcohol may be used to quiet this emotional turmoil, but when used in excess, it encourages abusive behavior. In addition to alcohol, people stressed by unemployment and/or unplanned pregnancies, have a higher rate of abusing. Studies indicate, “One in four abused women are hit during pregnancy, and unwanted children are very likely to be abused themselves.”

### Help 101

There is help for those who are either the abused or the abuser. At CSULB, there are several on-campus organizations that offer support, answers to questions, and resources. They are:

- **University Police**  (562) 985-4101
- **Women’s Resource Center**  (562) 985-8576
- **Counseling & Psychological Services**  (562) 985-4001
- **Student Health Services**  (562) 985-1732

This website, [www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/cdic/epic/furefer/losangeles.htm](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/cdic/epic/furefer/losangeles.htm) provides the location of resources for women’s shelters, programs, counseling services, sexual assault services, counseling services for batters, child abuse services, and elder abuse services. Other important resources and websites are:

- **National Domestic Violence Hotline**  1-800-799-SAFE  [www.ndvh.org](http://www.ndvh.org)
- **National Coalition Against Domestic Violence**  [www.ncadv.org](http://www.ncadv.org)
- **National Sexual Violence Resource Center**  [www.nsvrc.org](http://www.nsvrc.org)
- **Family Violence Prevention Fund**  [www.endabuse.org](http://www.endabuse.org)
- **American Institute on Domestic Violence**  [www.aid-usa.com](http://www.aid-usa.com)
- **U.S. Justice Department Violence Against Women**  [www.ovw.usdoj.gov](http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov)
- **Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network**  [www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)

The first and hardest step is to break the silence. Tell someone about the abuse. No longer keep it a secret. Tell someone that is trustworthy and safe, whether it is a friend, a family member, a clergyman, a doctor, a professor or a counselor. Do not wait until the situation gets better, it never will. SET THE TRUTH FREE NOW.

### References


An Assault at the Deepest Level
Arianne Stamps and Linda Peña

For sexual assault survivors, university campuses offer assistance through the development of sexual assault policies and reporting requirements; educational outreach sexual assault programming; and victim/survivor-centered response services that provide medical assistance (STI and pregnancy tests), legal assistance, counseling, and advocacy centers. In spite of these pro-active efforts, few students come forward to utilize this support. Skeptics speculate the low turn-out indicates sexual assault is over exaggerated. However, credible research asserts sexual assault offenses are even higher than estimated, especially amongst university students. Experts attribute students not coming forward due to society’s condemnation of the victim. Often a victim/survivor fears reporting because he/she must prove his/her innocence first before the perpetrator is held accountable for his/her actions.

One of society’s dirty little secret is Sexual Assault/Rape. It is a societal, yet intrinsically personal violation that causes people to respond to it on many different levels: physically, emotionally, and psychologically. Only a survivor apprehends how this tormenting offense is thrust upon them through acts of force and violence, guised as sexual intimacy. Such sexual offenses are defined by the California Penal Code as:

- **Sexual assault** - all physical acts of touching, penetration by an object, anal sex and oral sex without a person’s consent.¹

- **Rape** - a specific form of sexual assault that includes sexual intercourse without consent.¹ “Legally, it is a criminal offense, and clinically it is a symptom of psychological dysfunction because sexuality becomes a mode of expressing power and anger and of discharging tension and frustration.”²

- **Date/Acquaintance Rape** - rape or non-consensual sexual activity between people who are already acquainted, where consent for sexual activity was not given, or was given under duress.¹

During these assaults, the victim is stripped of identity, self-esteem, and self-worth, as the perpetrator invades not only the body, but those sanctuaries of the victim’s psyche. The perpetrator ransacks the victim’s rights to power, control, free choice and the pursuit of happiness.

**Survivor** is a term often used to refer to an individual who has been the target of an attempted or completed rape or sexual assault. This word validates the victim’s strength and determination to survive, and signifies empowerment through a retrieval of control after the offense.¹ This catastrophic calamity not only shakes the basic foundations of the victim/survivor, but for all those who care for the survivor. Friends and family find themselves helpless, asking, “What should or can I do?” In an attempt to help the survivor, sometimes the least beneficial and positive suggestions are made, such as:

- Don’t dwell upon it!
- Act as if nothing happened!
- Be strong and just get back to “normal”.

For the survivor, a sense of what was once “normal” is forever lost. No matter how he/she processes the assault, no survivor returns emotionally and psychologically to where he/she was once before the attack. Not only are those who surround the survivor at a loss for words, but the survivor is even more confused, asking such questions as:

- Did this really happen?
- Am I partly to blame?
- Who can I tell – should I even tell?
- Do I go to the police?
- Do I go to the hospital?
- Am I pregnant?
- Am I infected with an STI or HIV?
- Will my friends and family believe me?

This article highlights college trends that may place students at greater risk for suffering a sexual assault; examines the emotional and psychological aftermath of sexual assault for a survivor; and details what support systems California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) is required to offer for all students whether they are directly or indirectly affected by a sexual assault. There is a high probability that many CSULB students will be impacted by a sexual assault, whether they are a survivor or the close friend and/or relative.

**College Sexual Behavior Trends**

Before detailing college sexual trends that place students at a higher risk for being sexually assaulted, it must be emphasized that even if someone participates in these behaviors it neither indicates blame nor responsibility to the survivor for the sexual assault. Blame, accountability, and responsibility are ONLY to be placed with the perpetrator. However, for students who participate in higher risk activities, establish safety plans to insure that actions are not misconstrued, causing possible incapacitation to act in his/her own best interest.
The Hook-Up is defined as a sexual encounter, usually lasting only one night, between two people who are strangers or brief acquaintances. With hook-ups, some physical sexual interaction is typical, but it may or may not include sexual intercourse. In a study at a large northeastern university, statistics revealed that hook-ups often occur in organized social functions on or off campus, such as dances, sporting events and Greek sponsored parties. College women reported that hook-ups were common and data gathered indicated 40% of college women participated in at least one hook-up. The survey specified that hook-ups “almost always occur when both participants are drinking or drunk.” The line between consensual and nonconsensual sex can be blurred or even obliterated when one or more partner is drinking alcohol.

No Verbal Intercourse before Sexual Intercourse blurs the lines of sexual consent and non-consent. If students do not talk about their sexual likes and dislikes before engaging, there is a higher risk for misunderstanding. Also, if one partner becomes fearful, confused and uncomfortable in asking questions or stating his or her sexual preferences, there is a risk of feeling forced to cooperate in completing an undesirable sexual act. If boundaries are never discussed, there is a higher risk for sexual assault. If the only guidelines students use is his or her “sexual drives”, there is a higher probability for one partner to feel coerced.

Sexual Coercion, legally is defined as “any situation in which one party uses verbal or physical means (including administering drugs or alcohol to the other party either with or without her consent) to obtain sexual activity against freely given consent.” Examples of sexual coercion can be:

- Wearing down an individual with repeated requests, as consent would not be granted freely.
- A seduction in which the person changes her/his mind, but is coerced into performing sexually.
- Sexual acts forced upon another through the use of threats, using a weapon, or administering a drug.

During the late 20th century, rape crisis centers and rape prevention education programs were created with the hope of lowering and halting future sexual assaults. Avoidance and self-defense classes were also presented to women. However, very little emphasis was placed upon WHO women and men were choosing to date. It is critically important to look at rape-supporting social relationships. Sexually coercive men and women often choose people for social and personal relationships who are supportive of interpersonal aggression and/or sexual coercion. Specific behaviors recognized as potential contributors to sexual assault/rape are:

- Sexual Entitlement: touching another with no regard for his/her wishes, sexualizing relationships that are not sexual, inappropriate sexual comments about a woman’s or man’s body.
- Power and Control: “high in dominance and low in nurturance, interrupting, being a poor loser, over-competitiveness, using intimidating body language, rigid traditional notions of gender roles, and game playing.”
- Hostility and Anger: quick temper, blaming others when things go wrong, and transforming other emotions into anger.
- Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence: using threats in displays of anger, using violence, in borderline situations, and approving of and justifying violence.

Students drawn to those with coercive traits may wish to take a closer look at the reasons they choose such partners. Often guidance through counseling can assist in becoming more adept in making changes in positive partner choosing. However, these above-listed traits do not guarantee that a man or woman is dangerous, but may be precautionary signs to be read as warnings. For those who might be sexually involved with another who possesses one or more of these traits, Nurius and Norris developed a conceptual model emphasizing a cautionary strategy called AAA (ASSESS, ACKNOWLEDGE, and ACT).

This plan goes into execution after the man or woman has communicated a firm “no” to sexual activity and the other takes no action to stop. At this juncture, the man or woman who stated “no” becomes a potential victim and must ASSESS the situation as potentially dangerous, checking for the degree of isolation and a potential escape route. The next step is to ACKNOWLEDGE if the other does not stop, this will become a sexual assault/rape situation. It is during the ACKNOWLEDGE stage that the perpetrator can gain an advantage because the victim becomes reluctant to label the situation as rape. The victim begins to rationalize and intellectualize that what they are experiencing is not what it seems. A rule to follow is, “If it does not feel right, then it is not RIGHT!” The last step is to ACT and to leave the scene by whatever means necessary. If all forceful verbal strategies such as yelling for help and calling the attention of others are non-effective, then begin immediate physical resistance in the form of pushing, punching, biting, and kicking. At CSULB, there is an excellent program offered to female students called Rape Aggression Defense (R.A.D.) workshops, in which positive actions are taught for self-defense. For more information, contact Cpl. Ami Rzasa at (562) 985-8538. Women come to understand the power they possess within their body. By always remembering ASSESS, ACKNOWLEDGE, and ACT, “empowers men and women to escape dangerous situations without spending time anticipating and fearing them.”
What Survivors Experience After An Assault

The most common emotions experienced immediately after the assault are fear and anxiety. It is normal to be fearful, even after days, months and years have passed from the assault. Sometimes a survivor’s fear will be triggered by a situation, a person, or a sound. Survivors state that they continue to relive the assault, sometimes replaying it over and over. Many survivors experience nightmares about the rape/sexual assault, and for some they suffer flashbacks that are vivid images of the event when he/she is awake.\(^7\)

Hyper-vigilance begins as a coping skill. The survivor intellectualizes if he/she is always on guard against another attack, his/her safety is guaranteed. But never letting down his or her guard, begins to cause negative effects, such as: sleep difficulties, the inability to concentrate on simple tasks, and sudden emotional outbursts as exhibited in impatience, irritability, and/or anger with family, friends, and classmates. Survivors can practice emotional avoidance by pushing away painful memories; however, in doing so they begin to block all feelings, whether positive or negative. A result of prolonged avoidance is the appearance of being emotionless.\(^7\)

No matter how hard a survivor may try, he/she never can avoid depression. After a sexual assault/rape, feelings of sadness and hopelessness are normal. In depression, survivors may never cry and/or cry endlessly; always be tired, sleeping endless hours or experience insomnia, sleeping only a few minutes at a time; loss of appetite or can never get enough to eat.\(^7\) With depression, it is inevitable that the survivor loses or experiences a lowered self-image. Survivors become fearful to express his/her desires, experiences self-blame, guilt and shame for the assault.\(^7\)

Another emotion experienced by survivors is anger. This emotion can be used positively if the survivor takes this internal negative energy towards taking actions on their behalf. For instance, a survivor discloses to a friend and/or family member that they were sexually assaulted, contacts a sexual assault crisis organization, and/or seeks the assistance of an on-campus support group. However, anger turned inward leads to further depression, and sometimes causes the survivor to be imprisoned by fantasies about hurting the perpetrator, even killing the rapist. When this happens, survivors become scared, thinking they may be going “crazy”.\(^7\)

Survivors experience changes in sexual feelings and responses towards others, even those with whom they experienced positive sex. It takes varying lengths of time with each survivor before they may trust and feel comfortable with another sexually sharing his or her body.\(^7\) For the loved one who has been sexually involved with the survivor prior to the assault, this can be a difficult time. As a loving and supporting partner, he/she must always keep in mind the aversion the survivor feels towards having sex is directed at the perpetrator.

Emphasize To The Survivor, “It Wasn’t Your Fault.”

In addition to the survivor’s emotional responses to the assault, there are societal norms that further complicate the aftermath and healing process. Even though sexual assault agencies, websites and other related resources emphasize to the survivor, “It wasn’t your fault,” much of society continues to blame the victim rather than the assailant. Or in other words, the survivor must prove their innocence before the assailant is held responsible and accountable for his/her actions. Ironically, society places the victim on trial!

One controversial issue concerns whether or not the victim was “asking for it” or provoked the sexual assault in some way. If the victim is a female, often the public evaluates the way in which she was dressed when the assault occurred. Studies suggest that if the female was dressed provocatively, society partially holds her responsible for the assault against her. In one study, participants were asked to read fictional police reports that manipulated rape history and victim provocation. The results indicated that subjects attributed increasing amounts of blame to the victim as her level of “provocativeness” intensified and victims with a rape history were blamed more than were victims without a rape history.\(^8\)

Whether the victim is wearing concealing or revealing clothes plays no factor into the cause for sexual assaults. Women in their 80’s are also raped, and in those recorded reports there is no indication that they were clothed provocatively. This myth that clothing can induce rape exists because of the Just World Hypothesis and Assumptive World Theory (Invulnerability Theory).

Just World Hypothesis: A jury showed very little sympathy for a rape victim through their decision to acquit the rapist. The jury foreman commented, “We all feel she asked for it by the way she was dressed.”9 The jury concluded that the victim was at fault because she was bound to attract attention by wearing a white lace miniskirt, a green tank top, and no underwear. The facts in this case revealed that at knife-point she was kidnapped from a Fort Lauderdale restaurant parking lot by a Georgia drifter and raped twice. Regardless of the reality of this act of violence, people blindly attributed blame to the victim by condemning her appearance. An explanation for the phenomenon of “blame the victim” is the Just World Hypothesis, as coined by Melvin Lerner.10 People have a strong desire or need to believe that the world is an orderly, predictable, and just place, where people get what they deserve. Such a belief plays an important function in our lives “since in order to plan our lives or achieve our goals we need to assume that our actions will have predictable consequences.”9 Also, “when people are perceived as good, it is expected that good things will happen to them; if they are perceived as bad, bad things will befall them as ‘just deserts.’”11 People with a strong belief in a just world want to believe that the world is safe and protected even in the face of harsh reality.
- Assault at the Deepest Level -

When encountering evidence that hints our environment is not predictable and manageable or the world is not just, society quickly acts to restore justice by finding blame. In a “just world”, the victim must have done something bad to deserve his/her misfortune. Thus the moral of this rape myth alludes; If a woman does not dress provocatively, she will not be raped. - FALSE!

Rape myths are “statements created to be truths based upon beliefs and attitudes aimed at justifying or denying aggression of males/females against females/males.” Studies indicate these myths are very prevalent on college campuses today. The following are examples:

• Deep down she/he really wanted to be raped.
• When women go braless or wear short skirts, and tight tops, they are just asking for trouble.
• Only those who are promiscuous get raped.
• Going to someone’s apartment is giving consent to sex.
• Women/men falsely report being raped because they seek attention.
• Any healthy woman/man can successfully resist a rapist if she/he really wants to.
• If someone is drunk and has sex with someone at the party, they are considered “fair game” for having sex with someone else at the same party.

Assumptive World Theory (Invulnerability Theory): This theory is “the assumptions or beliefs that ground, secure, or orient people into a sense of reality, meaning, or purpose to life.” If this is held to be true, then rape victims become a glaring reminder of our own vulnerability. To maintain the validity of this theory, society must then view the rape victim accountable for their own misfortune, such as is the case of the woman who accused Kobe Bryant. “In the summer of 2003, the news media reported that the sheriff’s office in Eagle, Colorado arrested NBA superstar Kobe Bryant in connection with an investigation of a sexual assault complaint led by nineteen year old hotel employee, Katelyn Faber.” Even though lawyers for both the victim and the accused claimed it would be a fair trial, Katelyn suffered far more than Kobe in the eyes of the public. She was labeled a liar, a slut, and someone wanting to make a “quick million”. According to the Assumptive World Theory, if Katelyn is tarnished, a bad thing can happen in a “good world”. In an odd way, there were those who believed the sexual assault balanced out her evil ways. The public condemned Katelyn by using the rape myth, “Women who consent to go to a man’s apartment, consent to sex.” Because of this type of media fabrication and “victim/survivor vilification”, it is understandable why students who experience an attempted or completed act of sexual assault or rape do not come forward. In spite of the fact that few women and men will report, it is estimated that “1 of 6 U.S. women and 1 of 33 U.S. men have been victims of a completed or attempted rape.”

The U.S. Department of Justice cautions that these statistics compiled in the National Violence Against Women (NVAW) Survey “probably underestimate the true number of rapes committed annually in the United States because they exclude attempted or completed rapes perpetrated against children and adolescents, as well as rapes perpetrated against women and men who were homeless or living in institution, group facilities, or households without telephones.” During the past decade, there has been great effort put forth in the hopes of assisting rape victims. However, often the help offered through rape crisis centers, women’s support groups and university support systems is geared towards females. For male victims of sexual assault and rape, there appears to be little support. Even though both female and male victims of rape and sexual assault share similar fears about reporting, for men there are further complications.

Male Sexual Assault/Rape

In our society, the joke, “Don’t drop the soap!” is synonymous with the common knowledge of jail rape. Prisoner rape has become “an accepted fact of prison life which threatens the ability of local, state, and federal government to provide for the safe and humane treatment of the more than two million incarcerated inmates.” In an attempt to support the human rights of every prisoner, a bipartisan coalition of national legislators, social scientists, and religious, professional, and human rights organizations came together to create The Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003. This act provides funding for the analysis of the incidence and effects of prison rape in Federal State, and local institutions. A staggering statistic to emerge from this analysis is “the total number of inmates who have been sexually assaulted in the past 20 years likely exceeds 1,000,000.”

For most people, prisoner-on-prisoner or child molestation is where the idea of plausible male rape and sexual assault begins and ends. The fact remains, numerous adult men who were never molested as children and were never incarcerated are victims of sexual assault. Far more often, males suffer in silence because society judges them harshly in the role as victim. Statistics reveal:

• In 2003 , one in every ten rape victims were male.
• 71% of male victims were first raped before their 18th birthday; 16.6% were 18-24 years old, and 12.3% were 25 or older.
• About 3% of American men – a total of 2.78 million men – have experienced a rape at some point in their lifetime.
Male rape victims are reluctant to report rape to the police, medical services and other organizations for fear of homophobic reactions, while homosexual male rape victims fear secondary victimization as a result of their sexual orientation and tend not to reveal sexual orientation to the police. It is not uncommon for a male rape victim to blame himself for the rape, believing that he in some way gave permission to the rapist. Some men question whether they were raped because they were sexually aroused, had an erection, and/or ejaculated during the sexual assault. Remember, these are normal, involuntary physiological reactions that both men and women will experience, whether it is sex with consent or sexual assault/rape. Sexual arousal does not indicate the victim's desire to be sexually assaulted/raped, or that the survivor enjoyed the experience. Sexual arousal can occur with or without consent. Heterosexual men sexually assaulted/raped by another male, fear being judged homosexual, especially if they experienced ejaculation. Even the victim in such a case is bewildered by his physiological response to another man.

In most international cultures, the male is regarded as the sex seeker/the initiator of the sexual act. Males are viewed as the sex stronger of the two sexes. Therefore, when a man becomes a sexual assault victim, he questions his masculinity, his identity, and his worth. If the opportunity arose, no matter what the circumstances, he would initiate the sexual act. And even more challenging to imagine is the stereotype of any man who is unwilling to have sex if the opportunity arose, no matter what the circumstances.

Understanding and empathizing with the challenges that both males and females experience in disclosing a sexual assault or rape is crucial. During the 1970's, rape reform began. In the beginning, it was a feminist cause because it appeared that heterosexual females were the major target for rapists. Even though progress has been made in establishing campus organizations and support groups, the barriers of personal shame, concern for privacy, distrust of criminal justice proceedings and fear of perpetrator retaliation still stop most from coming forward. The California Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CALCASA) stresses that sexual assault is not the survivor's fault and that as a survivor he/she has these specific rights:

**Rights**
- To be treated with respect, dignity and courtesy.
- To file a police report and receive services, no matter what the survivor's relationship is to the assailant.
- To not be attacked because of race, age, class, gender, sexual orientation or occupation.
- To have a sexual assault counselor come with the survivor to medical, law enforcement and legal proceedings.

Rape Trauma Syndrome
Survivors experience a phenomenon called Rape Trauma Syndrome. In this syndrome, there are four phases. Based upon individual personalities, life experiences, cultural backgrounds and resources, survivors move from one phase to another and can re-experience a phase again in no particular order.

**Rights (Cont’d)**
- To be told of any necessary follow-up care and testing.
- To voice complaints and expect to have them heard and accepted.
- To be given time to ask questions about any forms that are to be signed.
- To ask questions and get answers about any tests, exams, medications, treatments or police reports.
- To privacy when meeting with a counselor or a police officer.
- To be treated with respect, dignity and courtesy.
- To file a police report and receive services, no matter what the survivor’s relationship is to the assailant.
- To not be attacked because of race, age, class, gender, sexual orientation or occupation.
- To have a sexual assault counselor come with the survivor to medical, law enforcement and legal proceedings.

**Acute Crisis Phase**
- Generally occurs immediately after the assault.
- A period of time in which life is temporarily disrupted and the survivor feels disoriented.
- Survivor experiences a wide range of emotions: fear, anger, hurt, disbelief, grief, self-blame and relief at having survived.
- Survivor may cry, shake, laugh uncontrollably, yell, or exhibit extreme rage.
- Survivor may appear emotionless, numb, withdrawn and cannot accomplish daily tasks.
- Incapable of making decisions, especially those in reference to the assault and its aftermath such as:
  - Seeking medical attention and care
  - Reporting the crime
  - Telling a friend and/or family member
  - Completing everyday tasks: housework, homework, job responsibilities, family responsibilities

**Outward Adjustment Phase**
- Generally follows an acute crisis phase and the survivor attempts to get “back to normal” by resuming and completing everyday tasks: school, work, and caring for a family.
- Often emotions towards the assault begin to lessen and the survivor may begin to talk openly about the assault, or she/he may begin to repress it. Both are ways for the survivor to seemingly regain control over his/her life.
- Eating and sleeping patterns may change and the survivor could begin to isolate from others.
- Survivor focuses on finding measures to guarantee his or her safety.

**Integration Phase**
- The survivor incorporates his/her experience into his/her life and moves forward, combining who he/she was before the assault with who he/she has become after.
- Reorganizing his/her life to meet the current needs and responsibilities.
- This reorganization may take months or years and is occurring during all phases of Rape Trauma Syndrome.
- It is possible to work with a support group and/or counselor in this phase.
- Survivor develops coping skills to manage feelings about the rape/sexual assault so that if extreme feelings are triggered, he/she is not overwhelmed.

**Rights**
- To be treated with respect, dignity and courtesy.
- To file a police report and receive services, no matter what the survivor’s relationship is to the assailant.
- To not be attacked because of race, age, class, gender, sexual orientation or occupation.
- To have a sexual assault counselor come with the survivor to medical, law enforcement and legal proceedings.
During any of the stages, no matter how much time has passed since the assault, the survivor may experience what is known as: **Reactivation of Crisis**—Triggered by sights, smells, sounds, situations or memories, a survivor is suddenly swept back into intense memories, fears, and a feeling of being overwhelmed. It is the coping skills developed in the integration phase that guide and assist the survivor through these crisis periods. As time distances the survivor further and further from the assault, the occurrence of these crisis periods become further and further apart. The survivor discovers they return to the Integration Phase more quickly.

**Choices Available for Survivors to Consider**

After the assault/rape, it is critically important that the survivor makes contact with another human being, someone he/she trusts and goes to a safe place. The California Coalition against Sexual Assault suggests the following for the victim/survivor to do after the assault:

- Go to a safe place.
- Reach out for support.
- Call a local rape crisis center.
- Call someone trusted, like a friend or a family member.
- Get medical attention as soon as possible.
- Medical care is important, in case of injuries and protection against sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy.

**Support and Protection for the Survivor**

“The passage of the Federal Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act) in 1990 dramatically changed the ways in which colleges and universities report incidents of sexual assault by establishing new mandates regarding the annual publication of crime statistics and policy statements.” This act was established in memory of Jeanne Ann Clery, a 19 year old Lehigh University freshman, who was raped and murdered while asleep in her residence hall room on April 5, 1986. After the rape and murder of their daughter, Jeanne’s parents were horrified to discover that students on Lehigh campus hadn’t been told about 38 violent crimes that had been committed during the past three years leading up to her murder. Her parents joined with other campus crime victims and persuaded Congress to enact this law, which was originally known as the “Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990.” This bill was enacted with the purpose of making students aware of sexual crimes in order that they may take extra precautions for safety. Also, it was enacted in order that these offenses are not kept secret from those students who might be most vulnerable.

In spite of the passage of the Clery Act, universities sometimes delay notifying students about sexual assault crimes. Eastern Michigan University was fined heavily for violation of the Clery Act. Laura Dickinson, a 22-year old first semester student at the university was discovered raped and murdered in her dorm room on December 15, 2006. Time of the crime could not be determined immediately because her body was found only after students in the residence hall complained of a strong odor coming from her room. Even though there was evidence present that indicated Ms. Dickinson had been sexually assaulted, university officials announced in a written statement, “At this point, there is no reason to suspect foul play. We are fully confident in the safety and security of our campus environment.” The university did not disclose any factual information about the circumstance of Ms. Dickinson’s death until February 23, 2007, when the Washtenaw County prosecutor charged Ormange Amir Taylor III, also a student at Eastern Michigan, with Ms. Dickinson’s murder. Prior to his arrest, Mr. Taylor had been caught in 2005 climbing through the window of a university building looking for girls and activity on campus. Students were outraged that from December to February they had no knowledge of this incident, nor the fact that Mr. Taylor was still free and attending the university.

Another landmark piece of legislation regarding sexual assault was passed in October 2005 through the California State Assembly titled Assembly Bill 1088. The law states that the campus must do the following:

- Provide as part of all campus orientations educational and preventative information about sexual violence to students; and post sexual violence prevention and education information on its campus Internet web site.
- The education and prevention information provided should include, but is not necessarily limited to, all of the following:
  - Common facts and myths about the causes of sexual violence.
  - Dating violence, rape, sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking crimes, including information on how to file internal administrative complaints with the campus and how to file criminal charges with local law enforcement officials.
  - The availability of, and contact information for, campus and community resources for students who are victims of sexual violence.
  - Methods of encouraging peer support for victims and the imposition of sanctions on offenders.
  - Information regarding campus, criminal, and civil consequences of committing acts of sexual violence.
- Campuses shall develop policies to encourage students to report any campus crimes involving sexual violence to the appropriate campus authorities.
- Campuses are urged to adopt policies to eliminate barriers.
for victims who come forward to report sexual assaults, and to advise students regarding these policies. These policies may include exempting the victims from campus sanctions for being in violation of any campus policies, including alcohol or substance abuse policies or other policies of the campus at the time of the incident.²⁸

Students of California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) are positively affected by the work accomplished in 2004 through the California Campus Sexual Assault Task Force, who presented to Governor Schwarzenegger a California Campus Blueprint to Address Sexual Assault.²⁴ This blueprint requires campuses to create a plan to address sexual assault through:

- **Protocol and Policy Development**
  - A campus assault policy establishes the institution’s intent to proactively address sexual assault complaints, respond to the needs of victims/survivors and hold perpetrators accountable.
  - A campus sexual assault protocol provides a detailed description of procedures that will be implemented in response to a sexual assault complaint.²⁵

- **Sexual Assault Victim Services Delivery System**
  - Victims have access to services provided by people with the requisite expertise in various aspects of sexual assault, including support for emotional, medical and legal needs.
  - Services for victims are available at all times, including non-business hours and academic breaks.
  - Victims are informed about campus resources and community-based services, their programs and services, and the level of confidentiality they provide.
  - Victims are assured that trained law enforcement or campus security officers are available and prepared to respond appropriately.²⁵

- **A Campus Strategy for Preventing Sexual Assault**
  - Social factors include establishing community standards for behavior, defining consent, and addressing myths and attitudes that support sexual assault.
  - Behavioral factors include working with men on initiating the prevention of sexually violent acts and working with women on awareness and safety issues (e.g., self-defense).
  - Environmental factors include physical and capital improvements to increase safety (e.g., lighting, emergency-call boxes, and maintenance of landscape vegetation, building locks, and appropriate equipment for campus law enforcement/security).²⁵

- **Establish the Role of Campus Officials in Creating the Campus Plan**
- **Inclusion in Development of the Plan must be in collaboration with:**
  - Campus law enforcement or security
  - Campus victim services providers, including victim advocates, counselors, health care providers, and women’s center staff
  - Judicial Affairs
  - Campus affiliated housing
  - Community rape crisis center
  - Local Sexual Assault Response Team (S.A.R.T.)
  - Clery Act compliance resources²⁵

In the concluding article of this journal, this collaborative effort, as presented in the California Campus Blueprint for Sexual Assault, is detailed. CSULB students will become knowledgeable about the organizations on and off-campus that provide information, facts, resources, counseling, legal advice and medical services for sexual assault/rape. It must be emphasized that wherever a student chooses to go for assistance, they will be met and listened to in a non-judgmental manner. It is the aim of this collaboration to hear what the current and immediate needs of that student are and how they can best be achieved. No one will force a survivor to make choices against their will. It is the hope and goal of all those supporting this endeavor to give back a survivor’s power and control over his/her choices. ■

**References**

S.O.S. Students on Safeguard
Holly Boettner

College students are among those at greatest risk for becoming a victim/survivor of an act of sexual violence, including sexual assault (rape by a stranger, intimate partner rape, and/or sexual relations without consent), stalking, and intimate partner violence. Most sexual assault crimes go unreported because the survivor does not know whom to tell, may fear he/she will not be believed, will be judged and/or blamed, or may fear retaliation if he/she comes forward. On behalf of those CSULB students who are victims/survivors of sexual assault(s) or know someone who was, it is important to recognize that this university listens and is aware of our students’ needs and concerns. Through an all encompassing on-campus concerted effort, the university provides choices and resources for students (male and female) affected by sexual assault to be heard, to gain knowledge, to find answers, and discover solutions.

Most people are not aware that college students are at a higher risk to be sexually assaulted than any other age group. The National Institute of Justice reports from December 2005 on a campus of 10,000 students, as many as 350 women may be victims of sexual assault. According to the National Center for Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, “a large-scale study conducted on several college campuses found that 20% of women reported that they had been raped in their lifetime.” Further data gathered, indicates that approximately 13-17% of women living in the U.S. were the victims of a completed rape, and an additional 14% of women were victims of other forms of sexual assault. “More than 80% of the women who reported a rape were under 25 years old at the time of their assault; nearly 25% of the victims of reported rapes are between 18 and 24 years old.”

CSULB Help Services
In April 2004, the California Campus Sexual Assault Task Force made a report to Governor Schwarzenegger titled “California Campus Blueprint to Address Sexual Assault.” Because of the prevalence of sexual violence among college women, the task force asserted that it is essential that CSU campuses establish comprehensive survivor services programs, prevention education programs, judicial protocols, law enforcement and security responses, and training for faculty and staff. In addition, Assembly Bill: Sexual Violence Prevention Act (AB1088) passed in 2005 sets down specific guidelines to implement resources that ensure all incoming freshman students be made aware of the sexual assault campus policies, presented information about treatment, and assistance for sexual assault survivors on and off campus.

The Campus Security Act, known as the Clery Act, is a federal law that requires colleges and universities to annually compile and publish crime statistics, including sexual assaults and rapes, for their campuses. There are specific on-campus sites designated as “campus security authorities.” For CSULB, our Campus Security authorities are:

- Mike Hostetler, Associate Vice-President/Dean of Students, BH 377
- Brad Compliment, Director, Counseling and Psychological Services, BH 226
- Michael N. Carbuto, D.O., MPH., Acting Director, Student Health Services, SHS 208
- Tom Angell, Director, Staff Personnel Services, BH 335
- Perrin Reid, Director, Equity and Diversity, USU 301
- Tom Malizia, Interim Director, Judicial Affairs, BH 377
- Marcela Chavez, Director, Women’s Resource Center, LA3-105
- Carol Roberts-Corb, Director, Housing & Residential Life, HRL
- Victor Cegles, Athletic Director, PA 124

University Police (UP)
The University Police serves an important role in assisting survivors to report the crime and receive medical treatment. They are a member of the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) program. If the assault has recently occurred, a survivor may decide to be assisted by SART. By first contacting the University Police, an officer will escort and transport the survivor to the SART room at Long Beach Community Hospital, 1720 Termino Avenue, Long Beach, (562) 498-1000. Also, a survivor can choose to drive or have a friend drive them directly to Long Beach Community Hospital. SART is comprised of a sexual assault investigator, a district attorney, a rape crisis counselor, and a forensic nurse. This team concept eliminates the repetitive questioning to a victim while providing a confidential and sensitive examination and follow up process. Also, SART can properly collect and store all evidence if the survivor decides to proceed with legal action. The UP headquarters maintains lists of agencies and telephone numbers for survivors who require assistance for counseling, housing, temporary restraining orders, and/or other mental health needs. If you need assistance, information and answers, please call (562) 985-4101.

Women’s Resource Center (WRC)
The Women’s Resource Center provides advice and guidance about sexual harassment, date rape, rape by an acquaintance, and reliable referrals in times of stress in a non-judgmental setting in which students can express feelings and concerns. In addition, the WRC is working in a collaborative effort with the
Long Beach Sexual Assault Crisis Agency (SACA) on Project SAFE: A Campus Response towards Eliminating Violence. Project SAFE provides prevention and intervention activities, including support and advocacy to reduce the incidence of sexual assault, domestic violence and helps develop solutions on the campus. Services available through Project SAFE are: classroom and organization presentations, professional training and consultation for faculty, law enforcement officers, administrators and health advisors; and referrals for counseling, and emergency and transitional living shelters for domestic violence survivors. The WRC is located at LA3-105 or call for assistance at (562) 985-8687.

Student Health Services (SHS)

As previously stated, it is extremely important for all survivors of sexual assault to seek medical care. SHS clinicians are mandated reporters. Therefore, if a patient discloses during the examination that they were sexually assaulted, the clinician will inform him/her of his/her rights and the procedure taken for reporting. However, for students who wish assessment and/or treatment without disclosing, simply make an appointment for a routine gynecological/STI check-up and/or request a pregnancy test. In this manner, no report will be filed. Also, students can disclose with anonymous reporting. In this manner, the clinician will call the University Police (UP) and within minutes, a trained officer will meet the student in the clinician’s office. The student may give as little or as much information as he/she wishes. However, whether the survivor chooses to report or not, the SHS will always support the student and seek to meet their needs. Clinicians can provide resources for physical, emotional, and psychological support services. To make an appointment call (562) 985-2727 or to come in and speak confidentially to a Sexual Assault Crisis Counselor call (562) 985-1732.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CaPS)

CaPS offer short-term, one-on-one counseling for students whose issues require individual attention. Counseling is also provided for couples that are having relationship difficulties. A counselor will assist in identifying and understanding the issues and will suggest behavioral modifications towards making positive changes. Group counseling is also available. Counseling and therapy groups provide a safe environment for discussions and interactions with others. Each semester, CaPS offers a variety of groups including general counseling groups, women’s issues, grief issues, interpersonal issues, and many others. CaPS is located in Brotman Hall, Rm. 226. Make an appointment by calling (562) 985-4001.

Survivors Moving Forward

One way to move forward and take control is to report the assault and possibly pursue legal action. Some may wish to make an anonymous report with the idea that at a later date they can add additional information. Anonymous reports are important because they may draw a link between other filed reports, which can serve as evidence in catching the perpetrator. Making any type of report is a form of positive action, as well as an action taken on behalf of all past and future victims.

Take a Self-Defense Class

The University Police Department and the Women’s Resource Center offers Women’s Self Defense Classes and Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) workshops throughout the semester. These classes provide options on how to make clear decisions on resisting an attacker by increasing awareness and providing a deeper understanding of one’s potential. Self-defense training should be used as a vehicle to empower the women who take it. By bringing together the elements of education, dependency on self, responsibilities in decision making, and realization of physical power, self-defense changes women’s lives. Call Cpl. Ami Raza for upcoming class schedule at (562) 985-8538.

Speak Out

A survivor’s story provides strength, courage, and hope. It is positive for those who have suffered a sexual assault to share with other survivors. Volunteering time at domestic shelters or rape crisis centers helps everyone. By sharing with others, discover similar shared emotions and feel safe in talking with others who understand. Also, participate in the Clothesline Project and Take Back the Night Walk events on campus. For further information about the dates and time, contact the Women’s Resource Center at (562) 985-8687.

Conclusion

CSULB is committed to assisting and supporting those survivors who wish to come forward for help. Whether they choose to report, utilize the services of SART, receive counseling from CAPS, or volunteer their services, CSULB’s goal is to provide the ways in which survivors can begin to heal. It’s never too late to take action.

References

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES
DIVISION OF STUDENT SERVICES

Health Services Offered:
Medical Exams
Immunizations
X-ray
Laboratory
Pharmacy

For Questions or appointments
Please call: 562-985-4771
Also Visit: www.csulb.edu/shs

Health Resource Center

Outreach Presentations:
Presentations on HIV/AIDS, STDs and
birth control are available upon
request for all campus classes and
organizations.

Nutrition Counseling:
Individual counseling sessions to
help you meet your nutritional needs.

HIV Testing:
Free and confidential counseling
and testing.

SHAW:
Sexual Health Awareness
Workshop helps enhance your
knowledge of contraceptives,
STDs, and breast and testicular
self-examination.

For more info
Please call: 562-985-4609
Also visit: www.csulb.edu/hrc