From Crisis to Courage, From Fear to Hope
Fostering Violence-Free & Socially Just Communities

Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault Statewide Conference
Preventing Sexual Violence on College Campuses
October 17, 2008 · Goucher College, Baltimore, MD

Keynote by Luoluo Hong, PhD, MPH
Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs & Acting Athletic Director
University of Hawaii at Hilo
From Crisis To Courage

- How to manage the bitter balance between responding to the needs of victims & survivors and engaging in work to end violence?
- How to allocate limited human, fiscal, time & facility resources to multiple yet complementary agendas?
- How to maintain hope in the face of stress, hopelessness, barriers & opposition?
- How to build personal & collective capacity to become powerful positive improvement agents?
Finding Our Inner Warriors

“In this world, there is nothing softer or thinner than water. But to compel the hard and unyielding, it has no equal. That the weak overcomes the strong, that the hard gives way to the gentle - this everyone knows. Yet no one asks accordingly.”

- Lao Tzu, 600 BC, Chinese philosopher, founder of Taoism, author of *Tao Te Ching*
ROOT CAUSES – Historical View

- Perpetrator & victim socialization experiences
  - Attitudes & beliefs towards sexuality & sex roles
  - Prior victimization on the part of the victim
- Individual characteristics of the perpetrator
  - Adherence to rape myths
  - Power, control & dominance tendencies
- Interpersonal & situational dynamics
  - Relationship between victim & perpetrator
  - Location of the assault
- Perpetrator’s misinterpretation of the victim’s intent
  - Alcohol and/or other drug use

Adapted from: Alan Berkowitz, et al., 1994
ROOT CAUSES – Emerging View

- Violence exists as part of a continuum of behaviors that begins with subtle violations.
- We are socialized to accept & be indifferent to violence via cultural beliefs, societal norms, corporate practices & institutional policies.
- Violence needs to be deconstructed as gendered behavior & systemic practice.
- Violence is inseparably interrelated with issues of social injustice:
  - Forms the foundation for a broader system of oppression, power & privilege.
Sexual Violence Continuum

- Obscene phone calls
- Peeping/voyeurism
- Indecent exposure
- Unwanted rubbing & touching
- Sexual coercion
- Sexual assault
- Aggravated sexual assault
- Murder
- Disrespect; Objectification
- Suggestive looks
- Sexist comments & jokes
- Verbal harassment
- Sexual harassment

Adapted from: National Center on Domestic & Sexual Violence, 2007
Pornography Gets Mainstreamed
Critiquing the Master Narrative

- We privilege the legal perspective
  - Was there penetration?
  - Is their proof beyond a reasonable doubt?
  - Is the perpetrator guilty (or innocent)?
  - Was there consent?

- We privilege the medical perspective
  - Were there visible bruises?
  - Was semen present?
  - Are the post-trauma symptoms typical or “normal?”

- We privilege the media perspective
  - Stories are “spun” to resonate with the public so that advertising revenue can be earned & ratings driven up
  - Exacerbated in this age of technology

- How do we give voice to the experiences & realities of victims & survivors, of families & communities?
Rape Culture

“It is a complex of beliefs that encourages male sexual aggression and supports violence against women. It is a society where violence is seen as sexy and sexuality as violent…. A rape culture condones physical and emotional terrorism against women as the norm. In a rape culture, both men and women assume that sexual violence is a fact of life, inevitable as death or taxes. This violence, however, is neither biologically nor divinely ordained. Much of what we accept as inevitable is in fact the expression of values and attitudes that can change.”

Source: Buchwald, Fletcher & Roth, 1993.
Rape Myths

Prejudiced, stereotypical or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists that typically legitimize men’s sexual aggression and blame women (Burt, 1991).

- “You can’t thread a moving needle.”
- “She’s just getting back at him for not calling!”
- “She’s a slut; she’s slept with tons of guys.”
- “He’s so popular: he doesn’t need to rape somebody to get laid!”
- “What did she expect would happen if she went up to his room?”
- “She was such a tease - you can’t just get a guy all worked up!”
Comparative Incidence of Rape

The risk of rape for a woman living in the US is

- 2.1 times greater than in United Kingdom, Spain or France
- 2.4 times greater than in South Korea, Mexico or Norway
- 3.3 times greater than in Denmark, Germany or Taiwan
- 6.2 times greater than in Russia or Italy
- 17.0 times greater than in Japan, Hong Kong or India
- 28.1 times greater than in Greece
- 91.3 times greater than in Saudi Arabia

Source: United Nations, 2000
Gender As Social Identity

- Gender refers to socially constructed statuses & ideas about how men & women are supposed to behave (Lorber, 2000) and relate to each other (Andersen & Collins, 2007)
  - Does not refer to biological or physiological differences between males & females
  - Definitions of masculinity & femininity may shift across time, place & context
  - Socialization into dominant gender role norms begins in childhood
- While there are multiple constructions of gender, there is a hegemonic masculinity & an emphasized femininity (Connell, 1987)
Deconstructing Masculinity

- Traditional Metaphor (Brannon & David, 1976)
  - No Sissy Stuff
  - Be A Sturdy Oak
  - Be A Big Wheel
  - Give ‘em Hell

- Hypermasculinity (Collins, 2005; hooks, 2003; Kimmel, 1993; Majors & Billson, 1992)
  - Men in marginalized social groups may overcompensate when prejudice & discrimination block pathways to masculinity

- All-male social groups (Benedict, 1997; Messner, 1992; O’Sullivan, 1993; Schwartz & DeKeseredy, 1997)
  - Exacerbates adherence to traditional norms of masculinity

- Metamorphosis (Gerschick & Miller, 1995; Hong, 2000; Connell, 1995)
  - Reliance/reproducing
  - Rejection/resisting
  - Reformulation/transforming
Masculinity & Violence

- Violence by boys & men is a behavioral affirmation of stereotypical (hegemonic) masculinity (Connell, 2001; Katz, 2006; Kaufman, 1999; Kimmel, 2000; Kivel, 1992; Lang, 2002).
  - Cultural beliefs about appropriate male behavior, as well as homophobia, serve to normalize men’s violence against women & each other.

- Boys & men represent the overwhelming proportion of perpetrators of all forms of interpersonal violence, including homicide, physical assault, sexual assault, domestic abuse & hate crimes.
  - Boys & men also comprise a significant proportion of the victims of non-sexual violence.

- THEREFORE, the primary prevention of violence must target & involve men as active, integral & invested participants in the deconstruction of patriarchy, masculinity & violence.
Social Justice

- Both a process & a goal to achieve:
  - “Full & equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs”
  - Equitable distribution of resources

- Vision is for all individuals to:
  - Be physically & psychologically safe
  - Be self-determining & interdependent,
  - Have sense of own agency & social responsibility toward & with others, community & global society

Source: Adams, Bell & Griffin, 2007
Opportunity Cost

“The fear of sexual assault that is part of the daily life of women in this country takes up a continent of psychic space. A rape culture is a culture of intimidation. It keeps women afraid of being attacked and so it keeps women confined in the range of their behavior. That fear makes a woman censor her behavior – her speech, her way of dressing, her actions. It undermines her confidence in her ability to be independent. The necessity to be mindful of one’s behavior at all times is far more than annoying. Women’s lives are unnecessarily constricted. As a society, this one issue hampers the best efforts of half our population. It costs us heavily in lost initiative and in emotional energy stolen from other, more creative thoughts.”

Source: Buchwald, 1993, p. 188
Traditional Paradigms

- Racial justice organizing has historically focused on racism as it affects men.
- Gender justice activism has traditionally highlighted sexism as it affects white women.
- Anti-homophobia education typically has failed to acknowledge the unique experiences of subordinated groups within the LGBTQ community.
- Anti-violence movement has been reluctant to address interpersonal violence within the broader context of institutional inequality & oppression, including patriarchy & white supremacy.
“How do we develop analyses and organizing strategies against violence against women that acknowledge the race of gender and the gender of race?”

“…we must also learn how to oppose the racist fixation on people of color as the primary perpetrators of violence, including domestic and sexual violence, and at the same time to fiercely challenge the real violence that men of color inflict on women.”

Why Privilege & Power Matter

- “[Patriarchy has] the power of naming, a great and sublime power. This power of naming enables [patriarchy] to define experience, to articulate boundaries and values, to designate to each things its realm and qualities, to determine what can and cannot be expressed, to control perception itself.” (Andrea Dworkin, 1981)

- “I have often noticed men’s unwillingness to grant that they are overprivileged, even though they may grant that women are disadvantaged…. As a white person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something which puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege, which puts me at an advantage” (McIntosh, 1988)

- Institutional systems of discrimination in the form of sexism, racism, classism, etc., differentially impact
  - Experience of violence
  - Risk for violence
  - Access to intervention services
  - Relevance of prevention programs

- We must fearlessly examine what divides us before we can move forward on what unites us
Toward a Genuine Prevention Agenda

- PRIMARY PREVENTION refers to specific measures which stop or reduce the possibility of violent events from occurring in the first place and which do so across a large portion of the community.

- SECONDARY PREVENTION refers to the early identification and amelioration of situations which could otherwise potentially lead to violence.

- TERTIARY PREVENTION responses repair or minimize the negative consequences associated with violence that has already occurred.

Source: US Department of Health & Human Services
**Spectrum of Prevention**

**The Spectrum of Prevention**

- Influencing Policy & Legislation
- Changing Organizational Practices
- Fostering Coalitions & Networks
- Educating Providers
- Promoting Community Education
- Strengthening Individual Knowledge & Skills

**Definition of Level**

1. Developing strategies to change laws & policies to influence outcomes
2. Adopting regulations & shaping norms to improve health & safety
3. Convening groups & individuals for broader goals & greater impact
4. Informing providers who will transmit skills & knowledge to others
5. Reaching groups of people with information & resources to promote health & safety
6. Enhancing an individual’s capability of preventing injury or illness & promoting safety

**Source:** Cohen & Swift, 1999
# Promoting Social Justice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRADITIONAL ORIENTATION</th>
<th>SOCIAL JUSTICE ORIENTATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focuses primarily on individual responsibility (usually that of the victim)</td>
<td>Focuses on individual choices/actions, systemic/cultural factors, institutional policies &amp; their interrelationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency of the perpetrator is largely invisible or unacknowledged</td>
<td>Agency of the perpetrator &amp; the system that support his/her actions is the focus of analysis, inquiry &amp; change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not acknowledge the salience of identity, power &amp; privilege in interpersonal relationships</td>
<td>Identity, power &amp; privilege are essential to understanding &amp; deconstructing interpersonal dynamics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions of violence are largely based in legal conceptions of violence</td>
<td>Definitions of violence are largely based in human perceptions &amp; experiences of violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention work tends to occur in isolation</td>
<td>Prevention work is embedded in efforts by multiple agencies to build community capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small group of invested individuals work to end violence (e.g., working from without)</td>
<td>Critical mass of invested individuals work to foster increased shared investment (e.g., working from within)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This Is Feminist Work

“Feminism is a struggle to end sexist oppression. Therefore, it is necessarily a struggle to eradicate the ideology of domination that permeates Western culture on various levels as well as a commitment to reorganizing society so that the self-development of people can take precedence over imperialism, economic expansion, and material desires. ...[Feminism’s] aim is not to benefit solely any specific group of women, or any particular race or class of women. It does not privilege women over men. It has the power to transform in a meaningful way all our lives.”

Appreciative Inquiry

An organizational change methodology that focuses on identifying the strengths & positive capacities of an organizational culture, then proliferating those conditions, rather than trying to simply identify deficits or problems & eliminating them.

Sources: Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Watkins & Mohr, 2001
Imagining Campuses of Justice, Peace, Respect & Wellness

- Take every opportunity to ensure actions, behaviors & communications consistently reflect espoused values, beliefs, priorities & principles.
- Engage all members of the campus community in the endeavor to transform the culture & foster positive change.
  - Institutionalize this through policies, procedures & protocol.
  - Allocate rewards & resources accordingly.
- Encourage & honor individual differences & autonomous choice but also recognize that individuals are accountable to their communities.
Imagining (continued…)

- Accord to all individuals, regardless of their gender, race, class, age or ability, the permission to access & constructively express the full capacity & range of human feeling, experience & thought, including:
  - Physical, emotional & spiritual vulnerability
  - Sexuality

- Teach & role model the responsible use & deployment of personal & institutional power to achieve outcomes that empower & maximize the potential & development of individuals & communities
  - Recognizing when one DOES have power
  - Acknowledging the moral, ethical and human obligations that are accrued when one has power
  - Understanding that refraining from using one’s power is still a choice
Imagining (continued…)

- Simultaneously honor harmony & welcome conflicts as opportunities for knowing, understanding, transforming, evolving & connecting

- Exercise multipartiality & can accommodate the existence of multiple truths & multiple realities
  - Understanding & validating is different than agreeing
  - Listening & hearing is sometimes more important than speaking

- Unrelentingly practice fearless self-inventory, honest self-critique & passionate persistence at individual & organizational levels, i.e., “organizational self-esteem”
  - “It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.” (Aristotle)
  - Affirming genuine successes
  - Never settling for less than what should or ought to be
What Is Needed from You: Vision & Persistence

- “Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed.” (Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from Birmingham Jail" in "Why We Can't Wait", 1963)

- “You just need to be a flea against injustice. Enough committed fleas biting strategically can make even the biggest dog uncomfortable and transform even the biggest nation.” (Marion Wright Edelman, Children’s Defense Fund)
What Is Needed from You: Ovaries of Platinum & Balls of Steel

“Courage is not the absence of fear but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear.” (Ambrose Redmoon)

When I dare to be powerful, to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid.” (Audre Lorde)
What Is Needed from You: Creativity & Hope

- “Thank goodness I was never sent to school; it would have rubbed off some of the originality.” (Beatrix Potter)
- “All children are artists. The problem is how to remain an artist once [one] grows up.” (Pablo Picasso)
“I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish humble tasks as though they were great and noble. The world is moved along, not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker.”

- Helen Keller
For a Copy of This Presentation

Please go to http://www.uhh.hawaii.edu/uhh/vcsa/ to download a PDF file of this PowerPoint presentation.

Thank you!

E-mail: luoluo.hong@hawaii.edu
Phone: (808) 974-7335