

## **Definition of Violence**

## **Add Your Definition of Violence**

- Violence is any action or word intended to cause hurt, emotional or physical, to a person, to groups, or to oneself.
- Violence is often directed at a person or people because of their gender, race, sexual orientation, or physical and mental abilities.
- Violence is often subtle and pervasive, and is often not recognized as violence, which can leave both the victim and perpetrator without help.
- Violence is using power to control another person through subtle and not so subtle ways.
- Violence happens on a societal level when the roles for boys and girls, women and men, are based on rigid, limiting, gender stereotypes.
- Certain kinds of violence - such as child abuse and battering - are against the law.

# My Experience with Violence

1) Describe a time when someone's words or actions hurt you.

2) Describe a time when your words or actions hurt someone.

3) Describe a time when you interrupted an act of violence. What prompted you to intervene?

4) Describe a time when you saw an act of violence taking place and you did not intervene. Why do you think you didn't intervene?

**I Used to Think...**

**But Now I Know...**


# I Have Been Thinking

by Eve Ensler

I have been thinking about violence. I have been thinking about an airplane full of terrified women and men and children smashing into a tower full of unsuspecting women and men who were just sipping their morning coffee. I have been thinking of the burning people jumping from the 100<sup>th</sup> floor, jumping for their lives. I have been thinking about the hundreds of firefighters and police officers who were lost, crushed under a collapsing tower. I have been thinking about a husband waiting in his office for 14 hours for his wife who worked on the 104<sup>th</sup> floor, his wife who had not called, who was probably never going to call, and yet he was still waiting. I was thinking of the man who called his mother from the hijacked plane to tell her he loved her, to remember he loved her. I have been thinking about the debris and the dust on New Yorkers' shoes and how shocked we are here in America, how protected we have been. I have been thinking about all the war torn countries I have been to, Bosnia, Kosovo, Israel, Afghanistan, and the dust on the peoples' shoes and the debris. I have been thinking about the people who were driven to hijack airplanes with knives and box cutters and fly them through buildings, who were ready, eager to lose their lives to hurt other people. I have been thinking about why, what would make people want to do that. I have been thinking about the words retaliation and punishment and act of war. I have been thinking about violence, what it feels like to be nothing to someone else. What it feels like to be a consequence of someone else's disassociated rage, disconnected fury. I have been thinking about the cycle of hurt for hurt, nation against nation, tit for tat. I have been thinking about how deeply something else is required. I have been thinking about the courage it required to think about something other than violence as a response to violence. I am thinking about the complexity of this and the loneliness of this and the helplessness and the sorrow that would be felt in the space where violence once was and the grief. I have been thinking that for those of us who are living on the planet right here, right now, we must live in this dangerous space, allowing helplessness, the grief, the sorrow to create new wisdom that can and will and must free us from this terrible prison of violence. I urge you, each one of you – fall into this space, weep, be lost, let go, dive into the grief – inside the emptiness and the pain it will be revealed.

# **Top 10 Comebacks to Obnoxious Catcalling**

**by**  
**www.teenvoices.com**

10. Is that the most original thing you could come up with?
9. Would you say that to your sister?
8. Take a picture, it will last longer.
7. I bet your mother would be so proud to hear you now.
6. Ah! Cupid's arrow right in my heart.
5. Now that you've whistled at me, I know that we're meant to be!
4. Have you always dated animals?
3. Maybe if you stopped staring at my body and maybe not.
2. If I thought you could remember more than five digits, I'd give you all seven.
1. Is that your version of hello?

# **Top 10 Comebacks to Obnoxious Catcalling** **by** **The Young Women's Action Team**

10. Would you say that to your Mom?
9. Don't whistle at me, I'm not a squirrel!
8. I wouldn't go out with you even if you were the last boy on this earth, no, the universe, no wait the galaxy!
7. Excuse me I have somewhere else to be!
6. Don't disrespect me!
5. Perhaps, in your next life, honey! Get back to me then.
4. Were you raised in a dog house?
3. Is that your version of hello?
2. Take a picture, it will last longer?
1. You want my digits... it's 1-800- not in this lifetime!

# Neighborhood Safety Zone

A large rectangular box with a thick black border. Inside this box, there is a grid of 15 smaller, empty rectangular boxes arranged in 3 rows and 5 columns. These boxes are intended for students to draw or write about their neighborhood safety zones.

Do you feel safe...

# Women Stand Up

Please stand up silently if:

- You have ever worn make-up, shaved your legs or underarms, or worn nylons/tights
- You've ever worn uncomfortable clothing
- You have ever worn makeup, shaved your legs or underarms, or worn nylons/tights
- You've ever worn uncomfortable, restrictive clothing – heels, a girdle, clothes that felt too tight or too revealing
- You have ever been afraid you were not pretty enough
- You ever felt you were not feminine enough
- You ever changed your diet or exercises to change your body size, or body shape, or weight
- You ever felt less important than a man
- You ever pretended to be less intelligent than you are to protect a man's ego
- You were afraid to speak or felt ignored because the men were doing all the talking
- You ever earned less than a man for doing equal work
- You were ever sexually pressured by a man in your workplace or at school
- You were ever yelled at, commented upon, whistled at, touched, or harassed by a man in a public place
- You have ever been called a bitch, a slut, or a whore
- You have ever limited your activity or changed your plans to go somewhere out of fear for your physical safety
- You ever stopped yourself from hugging, kissing, or holding hands with another woman for fear you might be called a lesbian
- You have ever been afraid of a man's anger
- You have ever been hit by a man
- You have ever been pressured to have sex with a man or had sex when you really didn't want to

Source: Helping Teens Stop Violence by Allan Creighton with Paul Kivel (1992)

# Creating Counter-Ads

You can “talk back” to deceptive or harmful media messages by creating *counter-ads*. These are parodies of advertisements, delivering more truthful or constructive messages using the same persuasion techniques as real ads. By creating counter-ads, you can apply media literacy skills to communicate positive messages, in a fun and engaging exercise.

The simplest way to create a counter-ad is to alter a real ad (magazine or newspaper ads work best) by changing the text or adding graphic elements; just write or draw over the original ad, or paste new materials onto it. (An example: change “Come to Marlboro Country” to “Come to Marlboro’s Graveyard” and add a few tombstones to the landscape.) A counter-ad can also be created by drawing a new image, copying the design and layout of a real ad. Collage techniques work well, too. You can also write scripts for radio or TV counter-ads, and read them to a class or group. Or take it a step further and record or videotape your counter-ad.

Here are a few tips to help you make effective counter-ads:

**Analyze.** Look at several real ads and try to figure out why they’re effective. The best counter-ads use the same techniques to deliver a different message.

**Power.** Your message has to break through the clutter of all the real ads that people see or hear. Think about what makes an ad memorable to you. What techniques does it use to grab your attention? Use them.

**Persuade.** Use the same persuasion techniques found in real ads – like humor, repetition, or flattery -- to deliver your alternative message.

**Pictures.** Visual images are incredibly powerful. People often forget what they read or hear, but remember what they see. The best counter-ads, like the best ads, tell their stories through pictures.

**Rebellion.** Advertising targeted at young people often appeals to a sense of youthful rebellion. Effective counter-ads expose misleading and manipulative advertising methods and turn their rebellious spirit toward the corporate sponsors who use them.

**“KISS” – Keep It Short & Simple.** Use only one idea for your main message. Focus everything on getting this message across.

**Plan.** Try to think of everything – words, images, design -- before you begin production. Make a few sketches or rough drafts before you start crafting the final product.

**Practice.** If you’re going to perform a radio or TV script (and especially if you’re making an audio recording or video) your cast and crew will need to rehearse. Then, rehearse it again.

**Teamwork.** Working in a team can lighten your workload and spark creativity. Brainstorm ideas as a group. Make sure all members share responsibility for the work.

**Revise.** When you think you're finished, show your counter-ad to uninvolved people for feedback. Do they understand it? Do they think it's funny? Use their responses to revise your work for maximum impact.

**Distribute.** Your ideas were meant to be seen! Make copies of your counter-ads and post them around your school, workplace, community center, etc. Get them published in your organizational or school newspaper. Show your videotape to other kids and adults. Your counter-ad can stimulate needed discussion and debate around media issues.

**Have fun!** Making a counter-ad is a fun way to learn about media, to be creative, and to express your views. Enjoy it!

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# Gender Stereotyping In The Media

Sexuality Exploited: The woman or girl is shown just for the enjoyment of others (usually men), and the woman's sexuality is the most important quality. The woman is usually in a provocative position and is the center of attraction but not essential to the activity. She is often shown wanting male attention or approval. Men are usually shown approving only of sexually provocative and available women. Beauty is also essential to the portrayal of female sexuality. Very few women can conform to the standards of attractiveness that the media portrays. A healthy and positive female image depends upon many more attributes than physical attractiveness.

Dismemberment of The Body: Media images often separate and highlight parts of a woman's body in a deliberately sexual way. The woman is no longer a total person. She has no personality and feelings, often without a head. In essence, she has become an object. This common technique of using parts of the female body with no indication of what activity the woman is involved in. It is most popularly used in advertisements, music videos, soca/dancehall lyrics, calendars and posters.

Passive, Submissive & Subservient: Women are frequently shown in situations that make them look weak and incapable of making practical decisions. The women are often catering to the men's needs. When women are constantly portrayed in this way and men are shown as being in control and dominating, this promotes women's acceptance of male domination and violence without resistance. These images promote the view that only men should be strong and powerful and women should be weak and passive.

Voice Overs: Male voices in radio and TV ads, news and documentaries are used to convey authority and expert opinion. Female voices often take on sexual tone and are used to sell products, or to advertise household items.

One Man With Many Women: This image promotes the acceptance of men having multiple partners and an irresponsible approach to relationships. It also promotes male hero worship while sacrificing women's individuality. The underlying message is that one woman is just as good as another and is easy to replace.

Race/Color: The media usually uses women with particular complexions to sell certain products and promote certain ideals. Dark skinned women are usually associated with products used primarily by low-income earners. Light skinned (brown) or white women are used to sell expensive products associated with a sophisticated, glamorous and rich lifestyle.

Women in the News: There are far more emphasis on the appearance of female newscasters than on male newscasters. News reports on women, especially those in positions of power and authority usually include descriptions of their personal appearances and family ties, which are NOT usually done for men. Topics such as Health, Family, Education and Community are considered "soft news", not serious. "Soft news" is considered to be more important to

women than men. Women's perspectives are not generally reflected in the news; women are rarely quoted as experts or spokespersons. The analysis of issues in the news rarely looks at how issues affect women.

Machoism: Men are shown in the entertainment media (i.e. films, radio dramas) as studs, conquerors of women with unlimited physical sexual prowess and sexual aggressors towards women. They tend to resolve conflicts by using violence. Men are also shown as emotionally inexpressive except for violent outbursts. They are seen in control of most situations.

Lack of Diversity: The media tend to show one type of woman; she is young, slim, beautiful, delicate and glamorous with the most important asset being her beauty. Rural women, fat women, disabled women, old women and women who do not fit contemporary society's idea of beauty and are not from a middle/upper middle class background are rarely seen in the media. Fat or rural women tend to be used for the purpose of comic relief. In contrast, men of ALL ages, sizes and colour appear in the media in more varied roles.

Sexual Division of Labor: Ads, soaps, news, entertainment show women primarily in the home. Men are rarely shown in a domestic situation. The focus on women in the home reinforces the view that the women's place is in the home, men's place is outside the home and that the public sphere is of more significance than the home sphere. Women are also shown serving, waiting, always ready to please men. Missing from the picture is the truth about what domestic work involves: the planning, budgeting, organizing, scheduling, deployment and supervision of personnel. In an office setting rather than in the home, such skills are well paid.

Commodification of Women: Women's sexuality is often packaged for consumption. Particularly in ads, the woman's body is associated with goods and services. Women are shown inviting persons to purchase the product through seductive verbal or body language. The impression is given that if you buy the product, you will get the women free. In some ads this actually happens: a man is seen walking away with a woman on his arm because he uses or buys a particular product.

Source: *Whose Perspective: A Guide to Gender-Sensitive Analysis of the Media. Training Manual. Produced by Women's Media Watch Jamaica (1998).*

# Lyrics: Keep Ya Head Up

## by Tupac

Little something for my god son Elija and a little girl named Koreem

Some say tha Blacker tha berry  
Tha sweeter tha juice  
I say, tha darker tha flesh and tha deeper tha roots  
I give a hollar to my sisters on welfare  
Tupac cares, but don't nobody else care  
I know they like ta beat ya down a lot  
And when ya come around tha block brothers clown a lot  
But please don't cry, dry ya eyes  
Never let up  
Forgive but don't forget girl keep ya head up  
And when he tells you you ain't nothin  
Don't believe him  
And if he can't learn ta love ya, you should leave him  
Cuz sister you don't need him  
I ain't tryin ta gash up, but I just callem how I see 'em  
Ya know what makes me unhappy  
When brothers make babies  
And leave a young mother ta be a pappy  
And since we all came from a woman  
Got our name from a woman  
And our game from a woman  
I wonder why we take from our women  
Why we rape our women  
Do we hate our women ?  
I think it's time ta kill for our women  
Time ta heal our women  
Be real to our women  
And if we don't  
We'll have a race of babies  
That hate tha ladies that make tha babies  
And since a man can't make one  
He has no right ta tell a woman when and where ta create one  
So will tha real men get up  
I know your fed up ladies  
But keep ya head up

Ooooooh child things are gonna get easier  
Ooooooh child things are gonna get brighter

Ooooooh child things are gonna get easier  
Ooooooh child things are gonna get brighter

I remember Marvin Gaye, usta sing ta me  
He had me feelin like black was tha thing ta be  
And suddenly tha ghetto didn't seem so tuff  
I thought we had it rough, we always had enough  
I often huffed and puffed about my curfew and broke tha rules  
Ran with tha local crew and had a smoke or two  
And realize momma really paid tha price  
She nearly gave her life, ta raise me right  
And all I had ta give her was my pipe dreams  
Of how i'd rock tha mic and make it to tha big screen  
I'm tryin ta make a dollar out of fifteen cents  
It's hard ta be legit and still pay tha rent  
And in tha end it seems i'm headin for tha penn  
I try and find my friends, but they're blowin in tha wind  
Last night my buddy lost his whole family  
It's gonna take tha man in me  
Ta conquer this insanity  
It seems tha rain will never let up  
I try ta Keep My Head Up and still keep from getting wet up  
You know it's funny when it rains it pours  
They got money for wars, but can't feed tha poor  
Sad there ain't no hope for tha youth and tha truth is  
There ain't no hope for tha future  
And then they wonder why we crazy  
I blame my mother, for turning my brother into a crack baby  
We ain't meant ta survive, cause it's a setup  
And even though ya fed up  
Ya got ta Keep Ya

Artist: 2Pac

Album: Greatest Hits

Song: Keep Ya Head Up

Homepage: <http://hem.passagen.se/deathrow/>

# Treat Her Like a Prostitute

by Slick Rick

Here's an oldie but goodie  
Hit it  
Excuse me  
What?  
Can I have your attention?  
Mn-hmm  
There's just a few things that I've got to mention (Uh-huh)  
There's girlies out here that seem appealing  
But they all come in your life and cold hurt your feelings  
I'm telling you  
As Rick is my name  
I wouldn't trust not girl unless she feels the same  
Treat 'em like a prostitute (Do What?)  
Don't treat no girlie well until you're sure of the scoop  
'Cause all they do is they hurt and trample  
Listen up close, here comes my first example

Now ya been with your girlfriend for quite a while  
Plans for the future, she's having your child  
Celebrate with friends drinking cans and quarts  
Telling all your friends about your family thoughts  
One friend was drunk so he starts to act wild  
He tells the truth about the kid  
It's not your child  
Acting like a jerk and on his face was a smirk  
He said, "Your wife went berserk while you was hard at work"  
And she led him on and tried to please him  
She didn't waste time, she didn't try to tease him

Treat 'em like a prostitute (Do What?)  
Don't treat no girlie well until you're sure of the scoop  
'Cause all they do is they hurt and trample  
Listen up close, here comes my second example

It's your wife  
You buy the tramp jewels and clothes  
You get sentimental and bring home a rose  
Give her everything 'cause you swear she's worth it  
All your friends tell you, "The bith dont' deserve it"  
Love is blind, so there goes your wealth

Until one day, you see things for yourself  
Came home from work early, Mr. Loverman  
You had a card and some candy in your right hand  
There's the mailman, he was short yet stout  
He went inside your house and didn't come back out  
Bust it  
Just a friendly stop, come on, is it?  
The mailman comes and he pays your wife a visit?  
The thought alone makes your temperature boil  
You say to yourself, she might still be loyal  
You open up your door and stand in a trance  
You see the mailman's bag and the mailman's pants  
Came home to party  
At work had a hard day  
Look around your house and you say, "Where the hell are they?"  
Run upstairs up to your bedroom  
You look inside your room, you see something brewin'  
Cover your mouth because you almost choke  
You see the mailman's dick way up your wife's throat

Treat 'em like a prostitute (Mm-hmm)  
Don't treat no girlie well until you're sure of the scoop  
'Cause all they do is they hurt and trample  
Listen up close, here comes my third example

Now your girl, she don't like to have sex a lot  
And today she's ready and she's hot, hot, hot  
As you open up the door she says, "Get on the floor"  
She wants to try things she's never tried before  
She takes off your drawers and works you over  
She calls you Twinkles  
And you call her Rover  
Next thing you know, the ho starts to ill  
She says, "I love you, Harold" and your name is Will  
That's not the half 'til you start to ride her  
Take off your rubber and there's one more inside her  
It's not yours-who can it be?  
I think it was a slick rapper, his name is M.C. Ricky

Treat 'em like a prostitute  
Don't treat no girlie well, treat no girlie well  
Treat no girlie well, until you're sure of the scoop

Artist: Slick Rick

Album: The Great Adventures of Slick Rick

Song: Treat Her Like a Prostitute, Typed by: [dj.flash@pobox.com](mailto:dj.flash@pobox.com)

# Popular Music Culture: Music Lyrics and Videos

Women and men between the ages of 12 to 35 are the main supporters of the popular music industry. The popular music culture has had an impact on almost all facets of young people's lives. It affects the way they dress, the way they talk, and the way they relate to each other.

Many pop songs make crude and explicit references to men's sexual exploits and female sexuality. The lyrical content is often structured around three broad themes:

- Woman-as-commodity.
- Woman-as-object-of-beauty.
- Woman-as-sex-object.

## **Woman-As-Commodity**

The woman-as-commodity songs often portray women as being available in exchange for money or luxury items. The women in the songs are often compared to possessions such as cars and jeeps. Men often sing about having many women to cater to their whims and fancies. If the woman does not live up to the man's expectations, she can be easily exchanged for another.

## **Woman-As-Object**

Women's physical appearance is of paramount importance to the male artist. Women who do not live up to the male notion of what is beautiful are often subjected to verbal "put-downs." Beauty is usually synonymous with youth. Some lyrics by male performers dissect women's physiques and identify body parts that have to be improved on, suggesting that the parts are the sum total of the woman. Subjecting women's body parts to verbal dissection by men implies a relationship where men are in control. This reinforces the importance placed on the male perspective.

## **Woman-As-Sex-Object**

The woman-as-sex-object songs portray women as available for male sexual gratification. Even though the male artist often sings about his many sexual exploits, a woman having multiple partners is subjected to scorn and is usually called derogatory names such as "hoe" or "skeezer." The woman-as-sex-object songs often perpetuate the dangerous myth that women enjoy violent sex. These songs portray the sex act as a violent encounter in which men are depicted as all-powerful, with the male phallus compared to a weapon, such as a gun or a knife. The lyrics boast about men threatening to have a woman's body at gunpoint, or having sexual intercourse with her until she dies, while women remain as passive recipients of this abuse.

## Roles for women in videos

Unless the video features a leading female artist, the women in the video almost always appear as appendages to men. These women are typically attractive and very sexy. Their usual roles are:

- Dancers, dancing behind and around the male band members, or male performers.
- Ornaments to be looked at purely for their physical attributes.
- Part of the audience/crowd – the camera zooms in on young, beautiful and scantily clad women in the audience.

These women reflect the current trends in 'beauty' and fashion. They are usually dressed provocatively, in skimpy clothing. Consequently, there is a heavy focus on their sexuality. How does the camera treat the woman's body? The camera pans women's bodies slowly, in detail, giving the message that it is acceptable to look at women's bodies this way. The camera focuses on one part of her body (often legs, breasts, or butt) discouraging the viewer from thinking about the woman as a total being with personality and feelings.

The women are also shown in silhouette/shadow form as shapes, which stress sexual features at the expense of individuality. The women who are being filmed or photographed appear to enjoy being on display, and revel in being looked at sexually. Women performers/singers are also sexualized in the same way.

# Ugly Ways

## by Tina McElroy Ansa

Lots of times when I'm eating a light meal during the afternoon, I switch on the television to BET "Rap City" or "Yo! MTV Raps" and listen to the songs while I'm eating. And I kinda liked that rap, you know, what they call the energy of it. And I'd be sitting there eating and bobbing my head to the music 'til one day I really started paying attention to the words and I started picking out all the "bitches" and the "hos" mixed in among the lyrics. And it made me right mad.

Who them young boys think they are talking 'bout women like that? And then, it got so that some of the little girls singing in them rap groups are saying the same thing. They got us calling our own selves "hos" and "bitches."

I started to send a letter to those young boys in those rap groups — and some of them ain't so young, either — and ask them what they know about a 'ho and what's a 'ho to them anyway. I meant to get Betty or one of them to write it for me.

To let those rapper boys tell it, they be the kind of woman my generation called a "whore." But then, "whore" is just some word made up by men to put women in their place. And ain't it just like a man to put you in your place about something that he wanted from you in the first place.

Now that I think about it, it's what Ernest used to have the nerve to call me when he used to come home 'bout drunk and put us out. He'd call me those names, not because he thought I was actually screwing around on him but because for him that was the worst thing he could think of to say to me. He thought it was the most hurtful thing a man could say to a woman. Call her a whore or a slut.

It's like all the other names men have given what they call "bad" women. Names like "skank" and "cunt" — calling us by our female parts, calling us out of our names for being women. Ugly-sounding names, names that make us sound like we smell. And they all do it. Just the other night, I saw that actor I like so much, Robert De Niro, in one of those Martin Scorchy or whatever his name is movies, call some woman a "skank." Real offhandedly, like it didn't matter to call somebody that. Just hearing it gave me the all-overs. Like he or any man got the right to just offhandedly label somebody with something as ugly-sounding as "skank" or "ho."

Even Arsenio said the other night in his monologue "skank 'ho" right there on television. I was shocked. They didn't even bleep it.

It's just like with those young boys who rap, they 'un put it to music, for God's sake. Now not all of them rapper boys be calling women 'hos and bitches. But I figure if one is doing it, it's one too many.

And if these rapper boys want to "express" their lives like they say they do in their music, then, why don't they talk about men like they talk about women? But then it dawned on me that there ain't no male word for 'ho. So, I guess they wouldn't appreciate being called a 'ho, either.

How those black boys feel if we started calling them "dick"?

Like: Dick walks in the room and goes for my money. This kind of thing make me feel kinda funny. Or what if we always refer to them as gold-digging dicks"?

I never did use the word "whore" that much anyway, but it made me want to stop using it altogether.

But I have to admit I still looked at those rap videos on television.

**Source:** Ansa, Tina McElroy. *Ugly Ways*. Harvest Books, 1995.

# Rap and R&B Videos: What Are They Trying to Tell Us?

by  
Rashea Morgan, 14  
South Boston, Massachusetts

Kirsten Latson, 13  
Boston, Massachusetts.

Have you ever really thought about how women are portrayed in music videos? We've watched a lot of rap and R&B videos, and from our point of view, it seems like they're trying to tell us to dress scantily [wear hardly any clothes] and to be attracted to rich men with lots of jewelry. They encourage us to judge a man by how much "ice" [diamonds] he wears and how big and fancy his car is.

The videos by top male rappers like Cash Money Millionaires, Mystikal, and Sisqo always have women hardly wearing any clothes. They're always talking about sex and "booty" and they swear all the time. Top female rappers like Lil' Kim and Foxy Brown also feature women dancing in the background with hardly any clothes on. Plus, take a look at these stats:

- Almost 33 percent of all videos feature females as "props," characters who appear around the main performer or in the background.
- 25 percent of female "props" are made to wear very revealing clothing that exposes parts of their breasts or butt.
- Over 25 percent of videos focus on specific female body parts like "props" breast, legs, stomach, or crotch.

Thankfully, there are other male rappers and R&B artists like Common and Tyrese. They don't always show off cars, money, or jewelry. They often rap about how much they love and are devoted to their girlfriends, who are actually fully clothed in their videos.

There are also some female R&B singers like Monica and Brandy. They appear to be very strong, independent women in their videos, who are not obsessed with men regardless of their "ice" or their cars. Unfortunately, this is not common.

**Source:** *Children Now: Boys to Men, Entertainment Media – Messages About Masculinity, September 1999.*

# Being Pimped Ain't Easy

by Moya Bailey

Last year, rapper Nelly was ejected from a mall for being in violation of the mall dress code. He was wearing a do-rag. The local National Action Network, a Black civil rights group, was all over it. Showing up at the mall the following day 150-strong, wearing bandanas and do-rags, they accused the mall of promoting a racist policy towards African-Americans. Reverend Al Sharpton, president of the organization, issued a travel advisory, warning Black people not to patronize the mall because of its discriminatory practices.

The Black community was ready to rally to Nelly's aid for being thrown out of a mall, but has remained eerily silent about the blatant misogyny in his lyrics.

Don't get me wrong, I'm a huge believer in free speech and know that Nelly has every legal right to call me and my Black sisters "bitches and ho's." I just don't understand why the leadership in the Black community thinks that it is okay.

Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin recently attended a fundraising event for a charity founded by locally based rap superstar Ludacris. This followed the controversy surrounding his being dropped from Pepsi as an endorser because of his sexually explicit lyrics. She said that his charity was separate from his music and since the two weren't connected she could support his foundation. It seems Black women are so undervalued in this society that not even we will fight for ourselves.

These are a few examples in a long list of instances where misogyny, patriarchy, and the degradation of Black women in rap music is ignored or overlooked by the bigwigs in the Black community. The Grammys have even come to embrace these negative aspects of hip-hop music, nominating for an award Nelly's "Hot in Herre" in which he instructs women to take off their clothes and asks "what good is all the fame if you ain't f-----g models?"

To be fair, these lyrics are surprisingly tame when compared to others or even the visual images accompanying such a song. As scantily clad women gyrate around fully clothed slightly swaying men, the message is clear: Women are simply sex objects to be ogled and had. Put most succinctly by rapidly rising 50 Cent: "I'm into having sex, ain't into making love."

R. Kelly, provider of such R & B gems as "Feelin' On Your Booty" and "The Greatest Sex," is reaping benefits from his high profile child pornography accusations. He continues to produce music and the profits continue to roll in. As a friend astutely pointed out, had the videotape revealed Kelly having consensual sex with an underage boy, the community would be in an uproar. But because it was a girl, she has been dismissed as another oversexed fan that knew what she was doing.

It's not fair. It's not fair that these male rappers continue to demonize and brutalize women in songs and videos and the female voices who try to challenge these characterizations are silenced. Poet and activist Sarah Jones, daughter of legendary poet/activist LeRoi Jones (Amiri Baraka), released a single called "Your Revolution . . ." The song draws inspiration from "The

Revolution Will Not Be Televised" by Gil Scott Heron. She took sexist misogynistic lyrics from existing songs that get radio play and wove them into a declaration of how she will not be used and mistreated. When her song was banned by the FCC, no Black leaders came to her aid.

Hip-hop's irreverence towards women is now being used as a marketing ploy. In a recent Heineken ad, Rapper Jay-Z dismisses his female guest's request for a drink refill, opting instead to get himself a Heineken. There seems to be a complete lack of criticism of this new advertising trend from men and even women journalists.

As far as I can tell, the best way to combat these negative images of women in lyrics and videos is to hurt the industry in the pocket by not buying this music anymore. The music industry is being upheld right now by hip-hop, and a severe dip in sales might be the warning needed for artists and record companies to change their ways. I'm not saying you can't listen anymore. You can download artists that don't need to be supported and buy the records of those who do. It is important that you only use your buying power to support artists who do not present misogynistic views of Black women.

I know it's hard. I have been known to bump the Ignition remix on my computer. That's why providing alternative artists and songs is so important. We can write our own songs, create our own beats. Producing lyrics and images that counter this misogyny is a step we all can take.

I'm going to make my own CD. I'm going to call it "Being Pimped Ain't Easy." Look out for hot tracks like "I'm Not A Ho," "Why Can't I Be Fully Clothed?," "I Don't Want Your STDs," and "I Don't Want to Date a Playa Because..." I'm going to have a hot video too. I'm going to rock the ice (of the H2O variety), show off all my cars (at a Mercedes dealership), and have male dancers (oiled up and grinding on each other, barely clad). Maybe that's what it will take to get some support from the leadership in the Black community.

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# Your Revolution

## by Sarah Jones

*dedicated to all the women and men struggling to keep their self-respect in this climate of misogyny, money-worship, and mass production of hip-hop's illegitimate child, "hip-pop", and especially to Gil Scott-Heron, friend, living legend and proto-rapper, who wrote The Revolution Will Not Be Televised, and continues to inspire me.*

your revolution will not happen between these thighs  
your revolution will not happen between these thighs

the real revolution  
ain't about booty size  
the Versaces you buys  
or the Lexus you drives

and though we've lost Biggie Smalls  
your Notorious revolution  
will never allow you to lace no  
lyrical douche in my bush  
your revolution will not be you  
killing me softly with Fugees  
your revolution ain't gon' knock me up  
without no ring and produce little future MCs  
because that revolution will not happen between these thighs

your revolution  
will not find me in the  
backseat of a Jeep with LL  
hard as hell  
ya know, doin' it & doin' it & doin' it well  
ya know, doin' it & doin' it & doin' it well  
your revolution will not be you  
smackin' it up, flippin' it, or rubbin' it down  
nor will it take you downtown or humpin' around  
because that revolution will not happen between these thighs

your revolution will not have me singin'  
ain't no nigger like the one I got  
your revolution will not be you  
sending me for no drip drip VD shot

your revolution will not involve me feeling your nature rise  
or helping you fantasize  
because that revolution will not happen between these thighs  
and no, my Jamaican brother, your revolution  
will not make you feel boombastic and really fantastic  
have you groping in the dark for that rubber wrapped in plastic

you will not be touching your lips to my triple dip of  
french vanilla butter pecan chocolate deluxe  
or having Akinyele's dream  
a six-foot blowjob machine

you wanna subjugate your queen;  
think I'ma put it in my mouth  
just 'cause you made a few bucks  
please brotha please!

your revolution will not be me tossing my weave  
making believe I'm some caviar-eating, ghetto mafia clown  
or me givin' up my behind just so I can get signed  
or maybe have somebody else write my rhymes?  
I'm Sarah Jones, not Foxy Brown

your revolution makes me wonder, where could we go  
if we could drop the empty pursuit of props and the ego  
we'd revolt back to our Roots, use a little Common Sense, on a Quest to make love De La  
Soul, no pretense...but

your revolution will not be you flexing your little sex and status  
to express what you feel;  
your revolution will not happen between these thighs  
will not happen between these thighs  
will not be you shaking and me faking between these thighs  
because the revolution, that's right, I say the real revolution, you know the real revolution,  
when it finally comes, it's gon' be real.

# General Tools for Media Literacy

The following observations can serve as general tools for more critical consumption of media:

**Media construct our culture.** Our perception of reality is shaped by the media we use to communicate with one another.

**Media contain ideological and value messages.** Some of these messages are intended and some are unintended. Media messages often target specific groups, and they can be positive or negative. They can be intentionally obvious (texts) or intentionally hidden (subtexts).

**Media use identifiable techniques.** TV commercials, for example, are very carefully constructed to influence our attitudes and behavior, using identifiable persuasion techniques. Flattery, repetition, fear, humor, powerful words and sexual images are especially common and effective techniques of media persuasion.

**Individuals construct their own meanings from media.** Although media makers attempt to convey specific messages, people receive and interpret them differently. All meanings and interpretations should be respected.

**The human brain processes moving images in a different manner than text.** TV images move at 30 frames per second. The information they transmit often bypasses the analytic brain and triggers emotions and memory in the unconscious and reactive parts of the brain. Only a small proportion surfaces in consciousness.

**Media is most powerful when it operates at an emotional level.** Most fiction seeks to engage our hearts as well as our minds. Advertisements take this further, and seek to transfer feelings from an emotionally-charged symbol to a product. Most ads tell us nothing truly useful about the product except its name and appearance.

**Filmic techniques and techno-effects enhance the emotional impact of media.** Camera angles, framing, reaction shots, quick cuts, lighting tricks, computer graphics, music, sound effects and other techniques are used to reinforce the messages in the script.

**Most media are controlled by commercial interests.** In the United States, the marketplace largely determines what we see on television, what we hear on the radio, what we read in newspapers or magazines. As we use media, we should always be alert to the commercial self-interest of most media makers. As global media monopolies grow and corporate interests become harder to identify, asking questions becomes even more important.

**Media construct fantasy worlds.** While fantasy can be pleasurable and entertaining, it can

also be harmful. Movies, TV shows and pop songs sometimes inspire people to engage in dangerous behaviors. Advertising constructs a fantasy world where all problems can be solved with a purchase. Successful individuals are able to recognize fantasy and constructively integrate it with reality.

***Media messages can be decoded.*** By “deconstructing” media, we can identify the techniques of persuasion being used and recognize how media makers are trying to influence us.

***Media literate individuals are active consumers of media.*** Many forms of media – especially television – seek to create passive, yet impulsive, consumers. Media literate individuals attempt to consume media with a critical eye, evaluating sources, intended purposes, techniques, and deeper meanings.

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# How to Be a Critical Media Viewer

1. Remember that all media images and messages are constructions. Ads and other media messages have been carefully crafted with the intent to send a very specific message.
2. Question why certain messages are consistently present in mainstream media and why others are absent.
3. Look closely at the appearance of media images: the colors, the editing, the camera angles, the appearance of the people (*are they young and happy?*), the location, and the sound or type of text.
4. Compare media images and portrayals of your surrounding environment with your reality. Make a list of the differences so that you are more aware of them.
5. Investigate the source of the media images you encounter. Who owns the network that your favorite television show is on? What else does that corporation own? How does the ownership structure of media affect the news and entertainment we receive? (Media Ownership Chart <http://www.thenation.com/special/bigten.html>)
6. What other stories about the world exist than those you see in the media? (*About relationships, health, peace & war, materialism, gender, finances, violence, globalization, sex, love, etc.*)



# How to Deconstruct a Media Example

A basic media literacy skill is “deconstruction.” This is the careful and close analysis of a piece of media, looking beneath the surface – the characters, plot, language, etc. – to understand its deeper meanings. Any piece of media – a magazine ad, a sitcom, a conversation, a feature film, a TV commercial, or whatever – can be analyzed in this way.

There is no one “correct” way to deconstruct a media example. One of the basic concepts of media literacy is that individuals construct their own meanings from media. This applies to the deconstruction process as well.

You can use the following questions to quickly deconstruct a media example:

- *Who paid for the media? Why?*
- *Who is being targeted?*
- *What text, images or sounds lead you to this conclusion?*
- *What is the text (literal meaning) of the message?*
- *What is the subtext (unstated or underlying message)?*
- *What kind of lifestyle is presented? Is it glamorized? How?*
- *What values are expressed?*
- *What tools or techniques of persuasion are used?*
- *What story is not being told?*
- *In what ways is this a healthy and/or unhealthy media message?*

# Guys Feel the Pressure to Be “Real Men”

by Scott Doyle, 18

The need for guys to prove their “manhood” is a phenomenon that dates back to prehistoric times, when cavemen tried to be the strongest, the fastest, or the smartest. How did they do this? Taking risks, pushing around the little guy, forcing their way into positions of power ... the list goes on.

Examples of men acting like “real men” continue today, even though they take on a slightly different form. Many adolescent males try as hard as they can to outdo one another, sometimes without even thinking about it.

They lift weights so they’ll look stronger than other guys. They flaunt clothes, Jordans, cars, and other material things to show off their money and sense of style. They pick on the weaker kids to show their dominance over them. They pretend to be the most sexually experienced guys in school.

Why is this behavior so common? Why is it that males, especially teen guys, try so hard to show off? Despite guys’ claims that they’re trying to impress the ladies (which, in itself, is an overly “masculine” response), many times they’re doing things just to impress other guys.

“I feel awkward when I’m in the locker room and guys are bragging about how many girls they’ve slept with. Since I’m still a virgin, I just lie and say I’ve slept with tons of girls, so I can fit in with them,” says James, 17, of New York City.

## Behind the Image

Michael S. Kimmel, Ph.D., an author and sociologist, has done extensive research on men, masculinity, and gender roles in society. His latest book, *Manhood In America: A Cultural History*, looks at how the American ideal of “manliness” has changed throughout the years and what causes men to strive for such a confusing and seemingly pointless ideal.

“The reason men do all this stuff—risk taking, driving fast, trying to impress girls, etc.—is really for the approval of other men. Growing up, our fathers and brothers are the ones that put us down and call us ‘sissies.’ Guys learn how to be ‘men’ from other boys, so naturally, that’s the approval they’ll seek as they get older,” explains Kimmel.

Alex, 18, of Pennsylvania, agrees. He says that many guys feel pressure from other guys, who are sizing them up and judging them.

“A friend of mine picks on other guys. He tries to have an intimidating image, so other people around him watch what they say. But most people don’t respect him. He doesn’t realize that by changing his attitude, he might lose the respect of few, but gain a lot more respect with the rest of the world,” he says.

## **Breaking Free**

So, how can guys develop a positive attitude about themselves, without having to impress other guys?

“Develop relationships with other guys that are real friendships as opposed to guys simply trying to impress each other. This will make it easier for guys to be open with one another, to admit their fears and help keep each other grounded rather than trying to outdo each other,” advises Kimmel.

And what about heterosexual guys, who think that girls only like the real “manly men”?

“In mostly all public opinion polls,” says Kimmel, “women say that they don’t care about those things. They’re looking for a guy who’s caring, sensitive, and thinks about his partner more than himself.”

Mary, 18, of Middletown, NJ, responds to the idea of the locker-room culture:

“If he’s bragging about being ‘the man,’ then I think he’s immature. It’s not something that impresses people. If I hear about him from someone else, I look at it as a heads-up, a warning, to stay away from him.”

Meg, 17, from Keansburg, NJ, agrees.

“I look for conversation skills in a guy, someone who’s also able to be comfortable around me. I look for honesty and little things like crying. It’s great to see a guy cry.”

Sometimes acting “manly” isn’t being a real man at all.

# What Street Harassment Looks Like and Feels Like

based on the Young Women's Action Team workshop (7/17/03 & 7/23/03)

## Examples of Street Harassment

Suggestive comments & gestures

Name-calling

Re-naming (calling you bitch or ho as though this were your name)

'Hollering'

Touching or grabbing body parts without permission

Whistling

Put downs

More severe: Demands for sex, sexual assault, and rape.

## Body Parts That Are Targeted:

Thighs

Face

Butt

Breasts.

## Who is Responsible for Street Harassment?

Society

The ways that people are raised.

Moral values

Men

Women

## What Are The Causes of Street Harassment?

Power and Control

Media-TV, Movies, Music, etc...

Ignorance

Drugs and alcohol

Home/family Upbringing

## Effects of Street Harassment

Feelings of fear, frustration, anger, and powerlessness

Loss of confidence

Lack of safety

# I am sick of being called babe

I am SICK of being called babe, sexy, hello legs, ass, batty, girl, baby, cutie, bitch, whore, ho.

I am not 'your' girl. You and your friends do not have the right to harass me on the street from your cars and then insult me because I ignore you.

You do not have the right to call me a dyke or frigid or a lesbian if I don't want to get intimate with you.

You do not have the right to demand sex and run me down because I don't.

I have the right to my own personal space. It is MINE. Force your way into my personal space and you are breaking the law.

I have the right to feel safe when I'm on my own.

I have the right to say no whenever I want. If you ignore me, you are breaking the law.

I have the right to go out, do what I want to do and not have to compromise who I am.

I have the right to say I am too young.

I have a right to work at school and in my job without harassment or discrimination because of my looks, sexuality or beliefs.

I am not a girl. I am a young woman.

Source: [www.lilith.ik.com](http://www.lilith.ik.com) — *Lilith's Manifesto*

# Searching for a Little Respect

by Elsie M. Giron, 17

Ladies, I know you can relate to this: “Hey girl, come here, let me get them digits!” or “Damn girl, let me tap that ass!”

Some boys think that kind of behavior is appealing and that we are actually attracted to that nonsense. They are wrong. I know for a fact that I’m not the only one who gets offended when these words are called out. I’m tired of putting up with the ignorance of these boys. I’ve noticed that when boys come up to me, the first things that pop from their mouths are sexist comments. All they care to see is what I’m wearing. They don’t see anything past that. They don’t care about how many AP classes I take or how many languages I speak.

I want some respect.

At least some of them are honest. Others pretend to be interested and turn out to be the biggest hypocrites we’ve ever encountered. Like a boy I was getting to know. We had PE together, and one day he approached me in class, and eventually he asked for my phone number. I don’t usually give out my number, but I had a crush on him. He was funny and charming, gave me lots of advice regarding my schoolwork, and applauded me when I did well. To make a long story short, he turned out to be a jerk. He lied and told all of his friends that he slept with me. When I asked him about it, he denied that whole thing. He broke my heart.

I know what else you can relate to, ladies. I know we all like guys to be nice and smooth when they are trying to get with us. We like guys who come up with a decent line instead of those played-out lines. Or a guy who could do the old-fashioned thing, who can just walk away without saying the “B” word. All we need is a little respect. Right, ladies? Is that too much to ask? I think not.

Giron, Elsie M., “Searching for a Little Respect” from *My Sister’s Voice: Teenage Girls of Color Speak Out*, Iris Jacob, ed. (2002)

# Walking While Female

*“Driving while black” is the phrase often used by African-American drivers to describe being stopped by police because of skin color. Perhaps more widespread but less talked about is “walking while female” – the experience of women being harassed when they walk by men in public. In these two stories, young women write about their experiences as targets. Their annoyance and anguish go far deeper than many adults imagine.*

## **Why I’m Angry**

**By Brynn Holland, 17**

The music was blasting and people were dancing. Club hoppers pushed my friend and me from all sides. Guys were coming from every angle, thinking it was OK to put their hands on me. Eventually my friend and I danced with our backs against a pole to keep our butts from being stared at or grabbed.

Boys were staring at the girls like predators eyeing fresh meat. The music rang with lyrics about beating, slapping and even killing women.

My friend and I stuck it out for as long as we could, but by 11 p.m. we had had enough. Regretting that we had each spent \$10 on the cover charge, we left.

“I feel so gross,” my friend said.

“I know. I need to take a shower,” I said. I put my hand in my hair and brushed it backwards only to find something wet.

“There is spit in my hair!” I said.

“Ewww!!!” my friend screamed. I grabbed a tissue from my bag and started wiping the gloppy mess out of my hair. I asked my friend if she could pull up close to the curb, so I could throw it into a trash can. As I rolled down my window, two guys on the sidewalk started yelling things.

“Yeah, roll it down!” they shouted. “What are you up to?” My friend sped away.

“I should have thrown the spitty tissue at them,” I said.

“Do they ever stop?” my friend said.

This experience really was a reality check for me. I felt so helpless and lost in that club, but I

realized no one knew I was feeling that way and probably would not have cared. It made me wonder if anyone would ever understand. Why can't I be treated with respect? Why can't everyone?

All I am asking for is a world where people of every race, sexual orientation, class, gender and so on can come together to dance, talk and be merry. To me, that's what it means to be a feminist.

Yet if I were to tell a person walking down the street that I was a feminist, he or she might ask, "You're a man-hater, aren't you?" "Why are you so angry all the time?" "Don't you think you're overreacting?" "Are you a lesbian?" Feminism has a really bad rap in today's society. Why? Because it challenges what this society is based on – oppression.

At Cleveland High I am in the humanities magnet, which focuses on social justice. One day we watched a video called "Dream World," which depicted media messages about women, including a Prince video and other rap videos. I watched Prince dance with two women and throw them to the floor and pull them around by their hair.

Then the screen flashed to "The Accused," a movie that tells the true story of a young woman who was gang-raped. I watched a man slam a woman up on a pinball machine and pull her hair and rape her. Even if you closed your eyes, you could still hear the rape scene going on. I sank in my seat. "This is reality," I thought. "This actually happened."

Females and males alike walked out of the video screening with tears in their eyes and pained expressions on their faces. It was obvious how wrong it was that music videos were making money off of a woman's worst nightmare.

Afterwards, a male friend gave me a hug. I knew he was a big rap music fan, so I asked, "Are you paying attention? I mean, is this affecting you?"

"Yeah. It's been an eye-opener." I could feel that he was just starting to see how hard it is to be a girl in this world.

I wish people understood the fear that many women live with. When I walk down the street, guys stop what they are doing to stare at me. I just want to hide. I feel so violated. It makes me hate being me, being a female. Why do I have to fear for my life, my safety?

I'm glad I can ask these questions. Instead of blaming myself and apologizing for the way I dress or the way I walk, I can be angry for being treated that way. I can see that when men whistle at me, they're the ones who are wrong, not me.

© LA Youth. [www.layouth.com](http://www.layouth.com).

## **Tired of Being a Target**

**By Loretta Chan, 18**

One summer night, some jerk threw a Snapple bottle at me while I was crossing a Manhattan street. I don't know what provoked him. I didn't even know who he was.

When I turned back from the curb where the bottle had landed (thank God it didn't hit me), all I saw was a group of guys standing around, smiling and saying, "Look at her, look at her." When I turned back in the direction I was originally heading, a guy said to me, like it was funny or something, "Baby, somebody doesn't like you."

I continued walking to the train station like nothing had happened. At least I acted like nothing had happened. But, behind my sunglasses, I was trying hard not to cry.

I had never felt so defenseless. It caught me off guard and I couldn't do anything to protect myself or to retaliate. For that moment, I wasn't the I-am-woman-hear-me-roar girl that a lot of people know me as. Instead, I became one of those pitiful girls who can't stand up against a male chauvinist pig.

I had never walked away from a situation like that before without at least giving the guy a cold stare and letting him know that I was offended. But all I did this time was walk away like I couldn't care less about how I was treated.

That night I told my mother what happened. I was expecting her to comfort me.

Instead, she barely even looked up from her desk. The first thing she said to me, in her Chinese accent, was, "Because of what you're wearing. It's too sexy." She even used the same hand gesture she uses when she yells at me for coming home late. She never even said that she felt badly about what had happened. And for the next week, she inspected the way I dressed even more closely than before.

By now, you're probably wondering what I was wearing that day. It was a long, sleeveless floral dress that was almost down to my ankles. OK, it was a little fitted, and had a slit on the side, but in no sense was it "slutty" or "showy" in comparison to what a lot of other girls were wearing on that hot day.

And what difference does it make? No matter what I was wearing, why should my mother blame me for getting a bottle thrown at me? Why did I always have to feel like I was on the defensive whenever I stepped out of the house?

Long before this, I'd learned how to stare straight ahead when passing any male and to walk very quickly. And the other basic stuff: never to get into an elevator alone with a guy and not to walk in a deserted area at night. But I never thought that anybody would ever attack me on the street, in broad daylight, as long as I minded my own business.

My mind became filled with hateful, violent thoughts toward men. I remembered the times they whipped out their penises on the train in front of me and started masturbating. I thought of the remarks on the street about my body. I thought about the perverts whispering their sexual fantasies to me as they passed me or were walking behind me. I had dealt with those things by just putting them out of my mind. But I couldn't just forget the Snapple incident.

So I started considering other options. First I thought of different ways of cursing guys out. Then I went down to the store to get a bottle of pepper spray. A week later I was looking at stun guns on 42nd Street. And for a moment I considered getting a small handgun and going to a shooting range to learn how to use it.

What really kills me is that I'm back to square one. I hate spending all this time bitching about something that half of our population has to put up with and to not have a solution. It would be too cheesy to just end with a moral for the males like:  
"Have respect for women." It's such a simple rule of thumb, yet they've had difficulty with it for centuries.

It would be even worse for me to tell other women that we'll just have to put up with abuse and harassment for the rest of our lives. Just the thought that women in the future, maybe my own daughters, will be treated as second-class humans makes me want to shred every male on this planet to pieces.

In this moment of passion and fury, that's the only solution I can seem to conjure up.

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# Writings by Members of the Rogers Park Street Harassment Project

*Don't Give Up!* by Farheen Fatima, 18.  
(Young Women's Action Team Member)

Ladies,

Street harassment is a big issue nowadays.

When a guy hollers at you, just pretend that you are not there.

Whenever a guy hollers at me, it makes me embarrassed.

I am getting tired of walking alone on the street.

But, Ladies, don't give up.

Take action that would stop this street harassment.

I keep asking myself:

Why are those boys trying to bother us?

AND

Why don't they holler at their sisters and ask them how they feel about it?

All I am asking for is:

Why can't boys take care of their business instead of hollering, staring, whistling, laughing, and touching girls?

# Writings by Members of the Rogers Park Street Harassment Project

*I'm Tired...* by Suliya Oluwa, 18. (Young Women's Action Team Member)

What's up cutie? Wanna ride with me, big Mama?  
You ain't all that, bitch.

I'm tired of walking down the street  
I'm tired of ignorant people hollering at me.  
I'm tired of people looking at my breasts  
while talking.  
I'm tired of feeling guilty for dressing in a certain way.  
I'm tired of being called names that were not given to me by my parents.  
I'm tired of staying home after 8:00 p.m., just because I'm scared of the unknown.  
I'm tired of feeling unsafe on the street.  
I'm tired of seeing my eyes watching some unacceptable act.  
I'm tired of asking myself the same question every day:  
    "WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?"  
I'm tired of being tired of all this harassment.  
All I want is my respect and dignity.

# Writings by Members of the Rogers Park Street Harassment Project

*Respect by Joyce Taylor, 16 (Young Women's Action Team Member)*

I want to feel comfortable while I walk down the street.

I don't go outside for men to approach me with let's greet and meet.

My body should always be respected by all men

The way I look should not always be why they grin.

I have anger that builds up inside, when men stare and glare.

Their nasty remarks are really unfair.

When passing a group of men my stomach starts to turn.

They ask me so many questions, and say how they feel, but my number is something you earn.

Most men feel they have to come at a girl

Incorrect in order to fit in.

But when it comes down to it, having respect

Shows women that YOU have respect, even within.

I am a strong person when it comes to men

but some things they say and do make me feel weak.

If only men cared, if only they could see

that being a woman is a tough job

But having respect, for us, can make the world

# I'm Not That Lonely

by Cheryl Jones

Hey Mama, Can I go home with you?

What?

Can I go home wit cha?

What did you say!?

Can I go home whi-chou

What!

Never mind.

Could it be that you don't have a home?  
Is it that you want to spend a few seconds  
between my thighs to get you through the night?  
Have you tried counting sheep?

Here's a crash course in closeness  
with a sweet sister's love. You only  
need sincerity and some vision to  
see that you mar me with your crudeness.  
I'm not a thing to be gotten with  
at any moment's notice.

Hello sister, how's the night treating you?  
Fine I feel real good tonight.  
We both smile.  
Which is much better than "Can I come home wit-cha."  
I've never been that lonely.

# Street harassment yields emotional repercussions

*by Amber Bryant*

There are few things that anger me more than street harassment.

I spent the last few days of 2002 staying with a couple of friends in Brooklyn, N.Y. One night, my companions attended a concert in Manhattan, leaving me alone for a night to stuff my face in front of six consecutive episodes of *Sex and the City*. Being a responsible video renter and itching for an after-dusk walk, I decided to trek the four blocks to return the DVD (and rent the next season).

My journey to Blockbuster was uneventful; the streets were busy with residents walking their dogs, taking out the trash and conversing with neighbors. However, on the way back to my friend's apartment, I encountered a strapping young lad who thought he'd strike up a conversation, opening with, "Hey baby, can I get up in it?"

In the interest of safety, I bit my tongue and glared at him, trying to look as psychotic and dangerous as possible. It obviously didn't work, as he and his two friends proceeded to follow me all the way to my destination, expressing his interest in my rear end, all the while and scaring the daylights out of me. By the time I reached the living room couch, I was livid. That a 16-year-old kid could tip the balance of power in his favor because he's male was enough to ruin the rest of my evening.

At first I tried to blame it on my location. However, while New York may have a reputation for street harassment, I can recall at least two occasions when a truck full of men thought it appropriate to whistle and holler at me in the parking lot of the Murfreesboro Wal-Mart.

This kind of behavior is horribly degrading, and for that matter, illegal. Unfortunately, until it isn't socially taboo to deliver a small amount of voltage to a harasser, women don't have many options to protect themselves, leaving their mental health in the hands of the chauvinist males who make a sport of catcalling.

So, the next time you get the urge to "compliment" a lady by making her feel like a piece of meat, don't. It'll be a great exercise in learning to be a decent human being.

Amber Bryant is a senior English major and can be reached via e-mail at [slopinio@mtsu.edu](mailto:slopinio@mtsu.edu).

From Sidelines Online, the Student Newspaper of Middle Tennessee State University

<http://www.mtsusidelines.com/main.cfm?include=detail&storyid=344476>

Published 1/13/03

# Emilyya's Skit

(Two B-girls walking down Morse Ave. passing a group of boys)  
Actors: Boy #1, Girl #1, Girl #2, Group of Boys (optional)

Boy 1: Hey ma was' up?

Girl 1: (talking to her friend) Who is he talking to?

Girl 2: I don't know

Boy 1: Hey girl in the \_\_\_\_\_ (talking to girl 1), let me holla at you for a minute.  
(walking up to her)

Girl 1: What?

Boy 1: So was'-up lil'ma?

Girl 1 I don't see your mother out here so who is you talking to?

Boy's Friends: Oooh she treated you!!

Boy 1: I'm talking to you. Can I get yo' number?

Girl 1: Um maybe not

Boy 1: Girl you know you want this [grabbing his crotch]

Girl 1 No correction you want this, Bye (and starts to walk away)

Boy 1: (grabs her arm) Wait!

Girl 1: Look you betta get yo' hands off me! I said I ain't want you, so bye!

Boy 1: You feisty just like I like 'em.

Girl 1: Well you'll just be liking 'cause you ain't getting' me (turned to her friend) let's roll,  
ain't nothing poppin over here.

Girl 2: I'm sayin' (they walk off)

Boy 1: Ooh you playin' hard to get that's alright cause I aint want yo ugly ass anyway.

Girl 1: Yea, I couldn't tell, whatever. (they walked off)

Boy 1: Bald-headed trick.

By Emilyya Whitis, 15 (Member of the Rogers Park Young Women's Action Team, 11/03)

# One Night

by Shauniece Armstead, 15.

Walking down the street  
Girl trying not too hard to switch  
her hips  
walked past a group of niggas  
tryna holla as they stared at her  
and licked their lips.  
Aye shorty what's yo name?  
Scared and frightened, the girl  
trying to get home was her main  
domain  
The boy stopped her tryna to  
spit his game  
Trying to get around him there  
was no way  
She just knew something bad was  
gonna happen this day  
"Please leave me alone" was all she  
could say  
Damn ma, calm down he grabbed her  
as she pulled away

He and his guys did some things  
to her untold  
Pulling at her clothes,  
all of them taking turns  
watching her tears unfold.  
But what they didn't realize  
was that she was only 12 years old.

They look her virginity  
they took her pride  
all in this one bad night, and  
no one heard her cries  
raped and left in the alley

fearing for her life.

Sirens were heard later on that night.  
What them niggas did just wasn't right.  
"Baby you are gonna make it please  
put up a fight"  
She heard her mom say crying  
right by her side  
but that's all she remembered  
cause she was pronounced dead at  
2:39

Shauniece Armstead is 15 years old.  
She is a member of the Rogers Park  
Young Women's Action Team. 11/2003

# The Young Women's Action Team

by Tsering, Farheen, Christine, Renee, Suliat, Jackquette, Joyce  
Young Women's Action team Members

Every year the Rogers Park Youth Net sponsors different programs for the youth in the community. This year, they collaborated with Friends of Battered Women to conduct a six-week youth-led research project about street harassment.

The project is known as the Young Women's Action Team. Street harassment has become a serious issue nowadays especially in our Rogers Park area that's why we feel we need to address it. In our group, there are eight girls.

The first two weeks we were in training. Friends trained us on how to work in teams, on how to conduct interviews, and on photojournaling. For the rest of the weeks, we learned about the different types of street harassment and how it affects girls in our community. We specifically focused on street harassment towards girls. We took pictures of the danger zones where street harassment usually happens such as the parks, beach, alleyways, train stops etc...

After the first two weeks of training, we made up interview questions about street harassment and how and why it affects women and girls. We conducted focus groups including girls from Centro Romero, Metropolitan Asian Family Services, Howard Area Community Center, the Rogers Park Youth Net and Family Matters. We also made up a survey and passed it out to girls in the community to see how they felt about street harassment.

The responses that we got were very helpful in doing our research. We want to use all of the materials that we got from our research to help other young girls.

From this whole experience, we learned a lot. We learned to come together and work for a common cause that is affecting all women. The way they media is degrading women is very wrong. In the music videos and magazines, they personify women as just sex objects. Every Thursday, a young woman from Community TV Network, has been teaching us about video production so that we can direct our own 3 to 5 minute movie promoting our ideas of being girls.

We also learned that stopping street harassment is nearly impossible because there are always going to be some guys disrespecting women and calling them names. But what we can do is to reduce street harassment. As a community we can educate boys and girls about it. We have to make our streets safe for all of the women and girls to walk on without someone trying to "holla" at us.

# The Street Harassment Project

## Statement of Purpose

THE STREET HARASSMENT PROJECT IS A NEW YORK CITY BASED ACTIVIST GROUP THAT WORKS AGAINST THE OMNIPRESENT HARASSMENT ON THE STREET AND IN OTHER PUBLIC PLACES OF WOMEN BY MEN. WE FEEL THAT STREET HARASSMENT IN ITS VARYING FORMS IS AN EXPRESSION OF MALE SUPREMACY AND SEXISM AND A FORM OF TERRORIZATION OF WOMEN, WITH THE ULTIMATE EFFECT OF THREATENING ANY PUBLIC ACTIVITY. WE BELIEVE THAT ALL WOMEN ARE SUBJECTED TO STREET HARASSMENT; AND THAT SOME GROUPS OF WOMEN, INCLUDING YOUNG WOMEN, WOMEN OF COLOR, AND WOMEN PERCEIVED AS LESBIANS ARE SUBJECTED TO FORMS OF STREET HARASSMENT WHICH REFLECT THOSE PREJUDICES AS WELL. AND WE REJECT THE IDEA THAT THIS SITUATION IS INEVITABLE AND UNCHANGEABLE, AND THAT THIS BEHAVIOR REPRESENTS INNATE MALE NATURE.

### **PREAMBLE**

BECAUSE women are terrorized daily in public spaces, our personal space violated by men who block our paths, stand too close, use a too intimate and insulting language toward us...

BECAUSE this behavior is implicitly menacing and threatening and often becomes overtly threatening when a woman expresses her anger at these affronts...

BECAUSE the line between verbal harassment and physical menacing is often crossed...

BECAUSE on June 11, 2000, hundreds of men assaulted, stripped and fondled over 56 women in the public space of Central Park and the rage of women in the city exploded...

**The Street Harassment Project was (re)initiated on June 15, 2000 and has been meeting weekly ever since.**

### **BELIEFS**

1. That street harassment, rape and assault are connected issues; that all stem from attitudes of dehumanization of women that are part of a bigger social picture: the system of male supremacy and sexism under which we still live.

2. We are feminists and see this struggle as an aspect of the larger struggle for women to be equal and have full human rights in every area of life.

3. Street harassment is a form of terrorization of women in which men attempt to impose dominance and women are supposed to react with subordination. The reinforcement of male

supremacy is its effect as well as its motivation. It is patriarchy flexing its muscles.

4. Street harassment is primarily about power and control; we do not bring it on ourselves by what we wear or do. It is enough to be female and out in public to be harassed.

5. That the streets are public space that men have for too long claimed as their "turf," so that when women venture onto them we are defined by men as being there for THEIR amusement and titillation. We challenge their assumption of ownership of public space; these are our streets too!

6. We reject "boys will be boys" and other rationalizations for men's behavior. We do not believe that street harassment represents men's inherent "nature," but is part of a socially constructed "masculinity," one that is part of a male culture that has been passed on through generations. It is a learned behavior that CAN be unlearned.

7. While all women are harassed, we are cognizant of the special forms that harassment of some women may take, for instance, women of color, very young women, perceived lesbians and women deemed "unattractive," to name a few. We wish to explore these differences.

8. We realize that some women do not consider to be harassment what we consider to be harassment. While we recognize every woman's right to define for herself what she considers "harassment," we are cognizant of the fact that all women are continually being intimidated into "playing along to get along," as well as being constantly pressured to prove--even to ourselves--that we are "attractive." We do not forget that this is a game in which men set the terms and women are punished if we do not comply.

9. We recognize that there are many forms of harassment going on in public spaces. These may be based on race, class, immigrant status, sexual orientation, gender expression, homelessness, police targeting--or have other "causes." There are relationships and overlaps between these harassments/abuses and what women experience because we are women--we support all struggles on these issues. We have, however, in THIS group, chosen to focus on the harassment of women by men:

a) because there is no other group solely devoted to this important work and

b) because we believe we must fight as FEMINISTS against street harassment--and in the context of a larger struggle against male supremacy and sexism.

## **OUR INTENTIONS**

To fight street harassment of women by men in all of its forms with our ultimate goal of having a society where women can go wherever we want, when we want, dress the way we choose and be able to express ourselves, including sexually, in freedom and in safety. We will work toward this goal by:

Creating an atmosphere in which street harassment is completely socially unacceptable,

Educating/raising awareness about what street harassment actually is, the toll it takes and how it shores up the system of male supremacy,

Creating a forum which can be a clearinghouse for our stories and in which we can share our experiences, support each other, strategize, inspire each other and build our courage through the knowledge that we are not alone,

Developing concrete ideas and strategies, particularly group strategies, for handling harassment on the street,

Providing an outlet for our rage, a way to help us stay sane by engaging in creative confrontation that allows us to feel OUR power,

Engaging in actions that will make the harassment of women a NOT PLEASANT and NOT REWARDING experience for the harasser,

Putting street harassment back on the map as an important feminist issue--one we don't have to give up on--and by so doing making a contribution to the development of a strong and growing grassroots feminism,

Challenging the men who CLAIM to support us to ACTIVELY confront other men on their harassing behavior,

Encouraging women everywhere to support each other on the street by creating a culture of solidarity among women,

Experimenting and passing on the results of our experiments to other women and groups of women so that we can be a "seed project," one that women in other locations might want to model themselves after so that street harassment projects might start up in many cities and countries,

**To accomplish our intentions through actions, graphics, street theatre, outreach, the internet, imaginative propaganda, patrols and any other method we can think up and pull off.**

# High School Girls Catch Flasher

**New York Daily News**  
<http://www.nydailynews.com>  
**The God Squad**  
By ALISON GENDAR  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER  
Saturday, November 1st, 2003

Today's lesson: Don't mess with the girls from St. Maria Goretti High School in Philly.

A pervert who got a kick out of exposing himself to them learned that the hard way.

The girls had seen Rudy Susanto, 25, skulking around their Catholic high school for more than a month, cops said.

And at least seven times, they saw a lot more of him than any of them wanted.

When Susanto tried to pull his same nasty stunt Thursday afternoon, the girls decided to mete out some street justice. South Philly-style.

After alert neighbors and nearby store owners wrestled Susanto to the ground, they cleared the way for the furious feet of the vengeance-seeking students.

"He had flashed me two times before, so yeah, I was mad," said sophomore Dorothy Kopicko, 15.

While Susanto was on the ground, he pulled out a small Swiss Army knife, cops said. Kopicko kicked it out of his hand.

"I was scared the first time he flashed me, but I wasn't scared then. I just kept kicking," she told the Daily News.

Robert Lemons, who owns Rose's Food Market about a block from the school, was one of two men who threw Susanto to the pavement.

"Those girls were kicking him, so we just held him down as long as we could," he said.

At one point, Susanto pulled loose and took off with at least 20 Goretti girls - clad in their gray, red and white plaid uniforms - in hot pursuit.

They chased Susanto several blocks until the alleged flasher ran out of steam and the Goretti girls closed in.

"We surrounded him. He was winded. He looked scared when we all came," said freshman Stephanie Kapovic, 15.

The beat-down landed the 5-foot-5 Susanto in the hospital with a fat lip - and in hot water with the law.

He was charged with 14 criminal counts including harassment, disorderly conduct, open lewdness and corrupting the morals of a minor. He could get up to 20 years in prison if convicted on all the charges.

Susanto's capture was the talk of Philadelphia. School officials, while scrupulously noting they did not condone vigilantism, couldn't keep a note of pride out of their voices yesterday.

"He had been doing this for a month and hadn't been caught until our girls nipped it in the bud," said school President Rita Frey. "And they did it in full school uniform."

# **Know Different Harassing Styles... So You're Best Prepared to SMASH Them!**

## **1. Oblivious (or Mr. "I'm just being friendly, babe")**

This man thinks he's being nice, but really he's just a jerk!

Your attitude: calm, straight-up, low-key.

Weird stranger: "You're looking nice today" or "why don't smile!" – (said with large, geeky smile on his face).

## **2. Dominating Ego-Tripper (or Mr. "Bow down to my sexual power, now")**

This man wants to intimidate you 'cause he's sure about how tough he is.

Your attitude: calm, solid, in control, and firm.

Creep on the street: "Hey cutie, I like that booty."

## **3. The Sexual Predator (or Mr. "I'm a criminal pervert, baby")**

This man gets off on using you for sexual thrills without your consent. He may be testing your response for future rape (called rape-testing).

Your attitude: He's dangerous! Be careful and strong. Protect yourself. Get out of there, get help!

Sketchy guy standing way too close to the pretty young thang at the bus stop.

## **4. Strategic and Territorial (or Mr. I need to put you in your place).**

This man deliberately intimidates you to protect his power and privilege.

Your attitude: think tactically; get friends to back you up.

"Tuff" guys on public basketball court – tries to intimidate you when you come to play.

# **Street Harassment is an ugly thing**



**Every day, women are harassed in public spaces by men who threaten us, make lewd sexual comments, give us so-called “compliments” like “Smile, beautiful,” touch us, or follow us.**

**Women no longer have to take this abuse.  
Fight back! These are our streets, too!**

*To find out more, contact [The Street Harassment Project](#)*

# How to Create Your Own Print Ad

## 1. Decide on your communication objective

The communications objective is the essence of your message. If you want to tell people not to eat rutabagas because it's cruel, then that's your communications objective. A word of caution: though perhaps the most important of your 8 steps, this is also the one that beginners tend most to neglect. A precise and well-defined objective is crucial to a good ad. If your objective isn't right on, then everything that follows will be off as well.

## 2. Decide on your target audience

Who is your message intended for? If you're speaking to kids, then your language and arguments will have to be understandable to kids. On the other hand, if you're speaking to high income earners (for example, if you're writing an ad to dissuade people from wearing fur coats), then your language will have to be more sophisticated. So define who your target audience is, because that will decide how your message is conveyed.

## 3. Decide on your format

Is it going to be a poster, a half-page magazine ad, or a tiny box in the corner of a newspaper? Make this decision based on the target audience you're trying to reach, and the amount of money you can afford to spend. If you're talking to kids, a poster in one high school will not only cost less, it will actually reach more of your target audience than a full-page ad in the biggest paper in town. When it comes to deciding on the size of your ad, the more expensive it will be to produce and run. Don't let that discourage you. You can do a lot with a small ad so long as it's strong, clear, and properly targeted.

## 4. Develop your concept

The concept is the underlying creative idea that drives your message. Even in a big ad campaign, the concept will typically remain the same from one ad to another, and from one medium to another. Only the execution of that concept will change. So by developing a concept that is effective and powerful, you open the door to a number of very compelling ads. So take your time developing a concept that's strong.

Typically, an ad is made up of a photograph or a drawing (the "visual"), a headline, and writing (the "copy"). Whether you think of your visual or your headline first makes little difference. However, here are a few guidelines worth following.

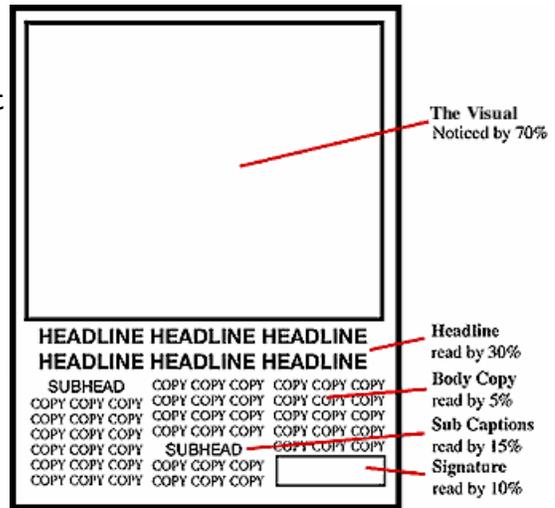
## 5. The visual

Though you don't absolutely require a visual, it will help draw attention to your ad. Research indicates that 70% of people will only look at the visual in an ad, whereas only 30% will read the headline. So if you use a visual, then you're already talking to twice as many people as you otherwise might. Another suggestion is to use photographs instead of illustrations whenever

possible. People tend to relate to realistic photographs more easily than unrealistic ones. But whether you choose a photograph or an illustration, the most important criteria is that image be the most interesting one possible and at least half your ad whenever possible.

## 6. The headline

The most important thing to remember here is that your headline must be short, snappy and must touch the people that read it. Your headline must affect the reader emotionally, either by making them laugh, making them angry, making them curious or making them think. If you can't think of a headline that does one of these four things, then keep thinking. Here's a



little tip that might help: try to find an insight or inner truth to the message that you're trying to convey, something that readers will easily relate to and be touched by. Taking the rutabagas example once again, it might be tempting to write a headline like: "Stop Exploiting These Migrant Workers." However, with a little thought, a more underlying truth might be revealed - that Migrant Workers are as human as we are, and that our actions do hurt them. From that inner truth, you might arrive at the headline: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Of course, the headline doesn't have to be biblical, though that in itself will add meaning and power for many people. Finally, whenever possible, avoid a headline longer than fifteen words. People just don't read as much as they used to.

## 7. The copy

Here's where you make the case. If you have compelling arguments, make them. If you have persuasive facts, state them. But don't overwhelm with information. Two strong arguments will make more of an impression than a dozen weaker ones. Finally, be clear, be precise, and be honest. Any hint of deception will instantly detract from your entire message. Position your copy beneath the headline, laid out in two blocks two or three inches in length. Only about 5% of people will read your copy, whereas 30% will read your headline. By positioning your copy near your heading, you create a visual continuity which will draw more people to the information you want to convey. Use a serif typeface for your copy whenever possible. Those little lines and swiggles on the letters make the reading easier and more pleasing to the eye.

### Subheads

If you have lots of copy, break it up with interesting subheads, as we've done in the graphic above. This will make your ad more inviting, more organized, and easier to read.

### The signature

This is where the name of the organization belongs, along with the address and phone number. If you don't have an organization, then think of a name that will help reinforce the message you're trying to convey. Perhaps "Citizens for Fairness to Migrant Rutabagas Pickers" would work for the example we've been using. This isn't dishonest. Your organization doesn't have to be incorporated or registered for it to be real.

## 8. Some mistakes to avoid

The single most common mistake is visual clutter. Less is always better than more. So if you're not certain whether something is worth including, then leave it out. If your ad is chaotic, people will simply turn the page, and your message will never be read. The second most common mistake is to have an ad that's unclear or not easily understood (haven't you ever looked at an ad and wondered what it was for?). The best way to safeguard against this is to do some rough sketches of your visual with the headline and show it around. If people aren't clear about your message, then it's probably because your message is unclear. And however tempting, don't argue with them or assume that they're wrong and that your ad is fine. You'll be in for an unpleasant surprise. Proofread your ad, then give it to others to proofread, then proofread it yet again. Typographical errors diminish your credibility and have an uncanny habit of creeping into ads when you least expect it.

From <http://adbusters.org/creativeresistance/spoofads/printad/>

# **I Fight Like a Girl**

## **by Anonymous**

I fight like a girl who refuses to be a victim  
I fight like a girl who's tired of being  
**IGNORED and HUMORED and BEATEN and RAPED**  
I fight like a girl who's sick  
of not being taken seriously  
I fight like a girl who's been pushed too far  
I fight like a girl who **OFFERS and DEMANDS RESPECT**  
I fight like a girl who has a lifetime of  
**ANGER and STRENGTH and PRIDE**  
pent up in her girly body  
I fight like a girl who doesn't believe in  
**FEAR and SUBMISSION**  
I fight like a girl who knows that  
**THIS BODY and THIS MIND** are mine  
I fight like a girl who knows that  
**YOU ONLY HAVE AS MUCH POWER**  
**AS I GRANT YOU**  
I fight like a girl who will never allow you  
to take more than I offer  
I fight like a girl who **FIGHTS BACK**  
So next time you think you can distract yourself  
from your insecurities by victimizing a girl,  
**THINK AGAIN**  
She may be **ME** and  
**I FIGHT LIKE A GIRL**

# Responding to Street Harassment

## Things We Do That Fail, Fail, Fail

Unfortunately, women are not taught to be successfully confrontational. When we're harassed, we usually fall into one of these three traps:

1. Pretend to ignore the harassment.

This passive, silent tactic leaves you with internalized anger, fear, humiliation, powerlessness and a big ole ulcer! You'll be seething for hours 'cause of some jerk! Pretending the incident was a joke or the harasser didn't mean it is also denial.

2. FUCK YOU! or other aggressive responses.

This hostile counter-aggressive tactic makes you look like the problem and may escalate the situation into violence leaving you with a big ole hospital bill (or worse!!!!). The bruised male ego knows exactly how to handle an aggressive woman – retaliate. This is not a game, play it safe.

3. Run Away (from the guy, from your life)

This avoidance tactic does not stop the harassment. Do you really want to walk five blocks out of your way just to go home? Do you really want to change the way you dress, where you work, who you are?

**FOR THE HARASSERS THESE RESPONSES ARE A VICTORY – HE CONTROLS YOU!**

The harasser already has a scenario in his head of how this will play out. These are the responses he's comfortable with. So shove them in your do not use file.

Adapted from *D.C. anti-street harassment squad: a guide to ending street harassment* (April 2003).

# Responding to Street Harassment Nonviolent Techniques that Work

HOLD HIM RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS ACTIONS.

## Non-Violent Techniques That Work!

Different situations call for different techniques. Always remain calm, assertive and in control. An aggressive approach will solicit an aggressive response. A neutral approach allows you to manage and de-escalate the situation. These techniques are designed to keep you safe.

### 1) The “All Purpose” Response.

“Stop Harassing Women. I don’t like it, no one likes it.”

If necessary, follow-up: “You heard me, Stop Harassing Women.”

- a) DO: use repetition.
- b) DO NOT: answer arguments.

This is best said in a matter-of-fact, almost bored voice. It can be said as you continue walking or jogging on the street.

### 2) The “Describe, Command” Response.

This response can be tailored to many different situations, whether with strangers or friends. It is a two-step process: first, describe the problem specifically and exactly. Second, give a simple command.

#### **Examples:**

- “Your hand is on my leg. Move it off my leg now.”
- “You are standing two inches from me. Move away now.”
- “You’ve been staring at me for five minutes. Look away now.”

Many women have been trained to be polite and not give direct commands. However, when dealing with strangers, commands are more effective without prefaces like ‘please’ and ‘thank you.’ Always keep commands short and firm in a calm voice.

### 3) ABC Technique

The ABC technique is an effective way to handle harassment from acquaintances. Be as specific as possible about A, B, and C and try to keep your voice level and non-judgmental.

#### ***There are three steps involved:***

- A) Name the behavior: “When you do (A).”
- B) Name the consequence: “The effect is (B).”

Adapted from *D.C. anti-street harassment squad: a guide to ending street harassment* (April 2003).

# Responding to Street Harassment

## Proactive Everyday Techniques

### **Posture: Walking, Sitting, Standing**

Don't walk, sit or stand with your head down, staring at your feet. Use a less passive, more assertive posture – walk with your head up, calmly and confidently. When you walk by people, meet their eyes in an assertive manner and continue walking.

We have every right to walk and stand in public places and use public transportation.

We deserve the same space as everyone else.

### **Personal Space: The Observation Circle.**

Be aware of everyone within a 10-foot radius. Be especially aware of what is behind you at all times. If someone is in your 10-foot radius, look at them seriously and remember 3 things about them as if you might need to pick them out of a police line-up.

### **“What if” Exercise**

The “what if” exercise can help you to figure out your options in different situations and to stay alert to your surroundings.

**Example:** If you're walking home alone, imagine that someone starts following. Think of what you would do. Where would you run? Who would you ask to help? What if they were in a car? On foot? As you walk around your neighborhood, figure out your options in an emergency.

Adapted from *D.C. anti-street harassment squad: a guide to ending street harassment* (April 2003).

# If You Are Being Harassed

## If You Are The Victim of Harassment, Take The Following Steps:

Be safe

Safety is a priority. If you are in a situation in which you feel unsafe at all, remove yourself from it as quickly as possible.

If you feel safe enough to respond to your harasser, do the following:

1. Name the behavior – For example, ‘Do not slap my butt. That is harassment’ or ‘Do not make suggestive remarks to me. That is harassment’ or ‘Do not comment on my body. That is harassment’ or ‘Do not stare at me. That is harassment’. You can also simply say in a strong voice, “Don’t sexually harass women’.
2. Name the perpetrator – ‘You, the man in the blue pinstriped suit, remove your hand from my breast.’ Or ‘You, the driver of the blue Honda, do not stare at my breast.’
3. Use strong body language – Look the harasser in the eye, speak in a strong, clear voice.
4. Do not apologize or ask a question – Don’t say, ‘excuse me...’ ‘Would you...’ ‘Do you realize...’ ‘I’m sorry, but...’ ‘Please....’
5. Do not get into a dialogue with the harasser – Do not answer any of the harassers’ questions. Simply repeat your statement or leave.
6. Do not swear or lose your temper – For many harassers, the goal is to get a rise out of you, which is why they participate in this kind of behavior. For them to see you getting angry or upset just encourages them to continue to harass both you and other people.

[Source: the UK anti-social harassment project]