ME TOO.

BY LILA TAYLOR AND SAMANTHA ZEID

With the bright lights of the #MeToo movement blaring down on society, voices across the world have been empowered to regain their agency, as well as to expose the underlying causes for the systemic and endemic problem of sexual assault and harassment. The Globe offers itself as a platform for these voices.

the movement

The #MeToo movement was rekindled this past year when actress Alyssa Milano tweeted, "If all the women who have been sexually harassed or assaulted wrote '#MeToo' as their status, we might give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem."

With tens of thousands of retweets and likes, "#MeToo" quickly became a household phrase. Allegations flooded the media, accusing previously well respected actors, business men and politicians of sexual harassment and assault. More men and women were held responsible for their actions. Companies cut ties with those who had been accused of sexual misconduct. High profile celebrities were let go or fired. Heartbreaking stories emerged of victims abused by those in high positions of power. One by one, tweet by tweet, victims of sexual assault felt more comfortable sharing their stories.

Behind Milano's tweet was Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein. Dozens of women have recently accused Weinstein of sexual assault, and as a result, the Weinstein company fired him and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences terminated his membership.

Three women have accused Weinstein of rape, in addition to over 60 other reports of sexual harassment. And he continues to deny all claims made against him.

Others have accused powerful Hollywood figures as well. Five women accused comedian Louis C. K. of sexual misconduct. Consequently, his movie release and comedy special were cancelled, and FX discontinued relations with C.K.

Women are not the only ones who are coming forward about their struggles with sexual assault. Over a dozen men have accused "House of Cards" actor, Kevin Spacey, of sexual misconduct and attempted rape.

Spacey admitted to some of the claims and used the accusations to come out as gay. This angered many in the LGBTQ community, who viewed this as a smokescreen to distract from the accusations of pedophilia. Spacey has since been suspended and replaced from his series "House of Cards," as well as other projects.

Sexual assault is not just a Hollywood calamity. Powerful figures in business, sports and politics are being accused of sexual misconduct everyday. Over a dozen women have accused President Trump of sexual harassment. Students walk back to their dorms at night scared for their sexual safety.

An employee will avoid their boss at work, knowing that they will attempt sexual advances that, when turned down, could result in the deterioration of a career.

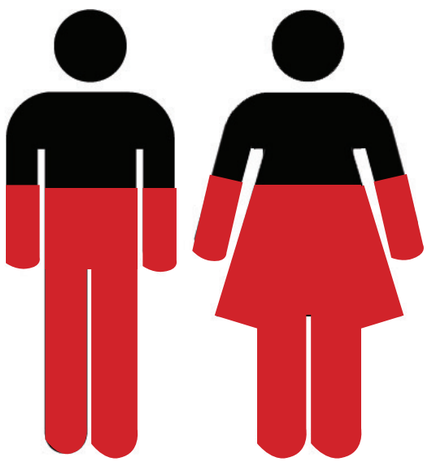
The fact that 1 in 5 women and 1 in 71 men will be raped in their lives, according to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, shows that there is a problem in the nation. The #MeToo movement is just the beginning.

Washington University professor of history and women and gender studies, Dr. Mary Ann Dzuback, described what sparked this movement.

"As a historian, I think there's no such thing as a single causal factor, so I tend to look at what has converged at this moment to enable this movement to emerge right now," Dzuback said. "One is that we have a president who's clearly a misogynist and abuses women, and yet really doesn't understand what he's doing. He models dysfunctional hyper masculinity that can't recognize the equal humanity of women or have women as separate from their relationship with him. He sees them as objects to be possessed."

Dzuback argues that despite the progress that feminism had made in the past, there is still a lot of work to be done. Today, the world is more connected than ever, with the Internet and social media at the fingertips of even the most ordinary person. Anyone can get their message out there––it is no longer limited to those who have a stage or podium.

"There's also confluence of major media people who have declared themselves as feminists, and they represent a whole variety of feminism, and they put the word ['feminist'] out there; they're not afraid to use it," said Dzuback. "They have a large following among the population that follows popular culture primarily young people, men and women. With the advancement of social media, the kinds of conversations that are going on are accessible to a far wider range of people than the New York Times letters to the nation and so on."



63% of sexual assaults go unreported

This social construct of using social media in order to do more than post photos and collect "likes" is new to many adults. Younger generations have been raised on this technology. Cellphones, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook are just a regular part of a daily life for most. Those with fame and a large following on social media have begun to use it as a tool to get a message across to their audiences.

"[It has] raised people's consciousness about gender inequality, about the abuse of women, gay people and trans people, about the ways that power operates to disadvantage certain people in the workplace, but also in other kinds of spaces like higher education institutions and so on."

Additionally, the #MeToo movement has allowed victims to tell their stories without as much fear of doing so. The domino effect of one person inspiring another to speak up about their past is what propelled the movement forward.

"[The #MeToo movement] has allowed a sort of greater consciousness to emerge and also a certain fearlessness about telling stories," said Dzuback. "Feminists have always found once you start sharing your stories, you create spaces for people to begin to take power and to understand better that this is a cultural, structural, political issue."

As this movement spreads, opening the eyes of the public, both victims and attackers alike, we are focusing on three of the areas where sexual assault is prevalent: our schools, the workplace, and in relationships.

the schools

Fifty eight percent of 7th through 12th graders experience sexual harassment in any given school year, according to a study done about sexual violence in high schools. According to a 2008 study, 1 in 5 high school girls say that they have been sexually assaulted at school. We spoke to the Clayton High School Counseling Department to gain a little more insight about how these statistics play out at CHS.

"[We] haven't had any students come forward this year that [We've] dealt with personally," said the Counseling Department. "All of us would split sexual harassment and assault. [We] have not had any complaints of sexual assault. [We] have had a harassment complaint. [We] have had students come to [us]. It was more of a processing thing. What was this like, and what were the feelings. Trying to understand if this is harassment or whatever it was. They had already gone to family and they were just coming here to figure out what it is and what the situation was. It was much more about them processing it and trying to figure out what category to put it in. [We[shared it with administration and we kind of let it go at that."

A 1993 study in Louisiana showed that only half of high school rape victims ever told anyone about their attack. It has been found that with sexual assaults and attacks at a high school age, the victim is much less likely to come forward and report the event.

"Sexual assault or sexual harassment is less reported by high school students than it is at a college level," said the Counseling Department. "[We] think it happens, but [We] think it's less reported. [We] get a sense that sometimes kids, at this age level, especially a 9th or 10th grader, may not be adept enough to consider what sexual harassment may be. They may think that a kid is just playing around with them in the hallway. But really it would probably be sexual harassment."

Not only are counselors involved when there is a reported situation of sexual misconduct in the high school, but administration is highly involved as well. Witnesses of victims must report the event to a teacher or principal, who then investigate the situation. After interviewing the perpetrator, they write a full, written report to the superintendent who will then determine the disciplinary action that is to be taken.

CHS defines sexual harassment as, "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature by anyone—employees, students or others. This definition includes, but is not limited to, both overt and subtle types of harassment such as uninvited letters, telephone calls, looks, gestures, touching, teasing, jokes, remarks and questions of a sexual nature. Further prohibited is any uninvited pressure for dates, explicit or implicit suggestion of sexual favors as a condition of employment or academic status or attempted or actual sexual assault."

The counselors are there for students to further process these events. Administration is there to deal with the discipline side of the issue.

"An assault or a harassment is a discipline thing," said the Counseling Department. "Of course there's a counseling piece to it, to help them process it and figure out 'what are your options,' but at that point, it becomes an administrative situation. [We've] had students in the past, in the hallways, especially underclassmen and things like that, and there's this sort of crowded inappropriate touching during that passing time. [We've] had breakups between students before, where you constantly have to see each other. One is hurt so rumors start and so the harassment is not necessarily 'I harass you sexually,'; it's the things that are said about you and spread around about you."

"it's not ever your fault"

One time, when I was walking home from school, we got back from a field trip from somewhere late at night. I live so close to school that I was just walking home with my suitcase, and this man on a moped like scooter was riding by. He stopped a little ahead of me. I was paying attention because I was nervous, and it was also because of what I learned in class. Things that told me that this doesn't seem right or that it was weird.

So I stopped walking and I called my mom and she was going to meet me halfway. He was just waiting for me to walk over so he could grab me or something. So I'm sitting down and waiting for my mom. He sees my mom walking to me and he goes off and just drives around by her. So he's circling around and he just starts masturbating.

That was like the first thing that ever happened to me. It was just really scary. I thought,'What sicko would do that?' Even after that, I didn't really have a lot of support. I guess I did with my mom, and she told the school. The principal was talking to me about it, telling me how I need to be safer. And I think that's so harmful. He can't make girls think that it's their fault for being like assault. It's not your fault––ever.

In China, a lot of social media was blocked, so I didn't spend that much time on it. In America, it is such a good platform to speak about these things. So many people are on it. People will have like five friends that like can talk about it. And that's when I got really interested in the topic. I just think that it's scary when girls aren't taught––when everyone isn't taught about this.

Avery Becker
- CHS student

As times have changed, so has the technology.

CHS recognizes that there are new ways that sexual harassment can manifest. One of the more popular ways has become social media and the abuse of it.

"[We] think that we can all speak to the social media [aspect]," said the Counseling Department. "It's not necessarily just boy and girl. It is a bunch of girls that will get on with really negative things and it can be sexual in nature. You're a slut, you're a whore, you're a this, you're a that, that is equally as hurtful than anything a boy would say. Or in a breakup or in a situation where sexual details are shared with other people––in my mind that's equally as harassing and assaulting to how I feel about myself and how I feel about myself in this very public world: high school."

There are examples of social media being used to cyberbully other teenagers, and the counselors at CHS are no stranger to this tool being used to torment another student, sexually or in any other way. One of the counselors shared this story of a past student's difficult experience.

"There was a student who transferred in from another local high school," the counselor said. "She had been at a party and had been intoxicated. She had done some inappropriate things and she had been filmed. It was put on social media the next day. It changed her life completely. She couldn't go back to school; she ended up not doing well academically. They had to move. They literally had to move to another school district and she started here. That's how bad it was. I don't think anybody at this table or in the administration discounts the impact that assault or harassment would have."

Even after transferring to Clayton, the same student still was tormented by the sexual abuse that had been inflicted upon her at her previous school.

"Through the social media, the harassment started bigger and bigger and other people from other schools knew. When I got her, that news about her that wasn't really true, she couldn't stop it at all. It was starting to creep in here too. One person saw on social media, and then another and it sort of rolled on her here. It can really change a lot for a student. For a person. Not just for a girl."

These changing times call for the changing of how students are educated. Online sexual harassment has since been introduced into the curriculum students are taught.

"Our health curriculum has also changed," said the Counseling Department. "Texting, sexting, that wasn't a part of it ten years ago. And now it's still not covered as much as it need to be covered. Officer Zlatic went into the classes a few years ago and talked about social media and texting and what that looks like if you say something or if you spread something around. Those are not conversations we would've had ten years ago."

Even so, the conversations being had now do not fully cover and address the conversations necessary for complete sexual education.

"[We] think we're doing it indirectly by the building of the relationships and making sure everyone feels connected so that they all have somebody that they think they could share with," said the departement. "But we probably could stand to do more and be more directive."

The counselors think that there is more that the school could be doing to help its students, and there are many organizations out there that could assist with that deeper learning.

"[We] think there are campaigns that are out there and simple messages that could be helpful," said the Counseling Department. "It's about self worth and those messages that can play and could easily be done throughout the school and should be."

Loveisrespect.org is a campaign, recommended by a member of the counseling staff, that focuses educating members of the community on what consent is, relationships and even communication or trust. Education is key when schools aim to build healthy and prosperous students.

"Educating, especially at that freshman/sophomore level and even into middle school, where you've played with people in the past and learning that that's not okay and touching is not okay," said the Counseling Department.

"Sometimes [we] think that it's like 'Well, we were just playing around,' but no one has ever acknowledged that it's not okay. Or even said 'You can't touch someone in that place even when you're playing around.' [We] think we need to be intentional in our words and actions. We're still having those kinds of conversations."

And the earlier the better. According to the counseling department 9th graders are too old to being learning about relationships and sexual conduct for the first time.

"It has to start very, very early. We cannot start at the high school level. It has to start really very young: what is appropriate, what is inappropriate, what is welcomed, and what is not welcomed. And [we] think we do. At the elementary schools we have a lot of those conversations and we meet regularly with all of the counselors throughout. Once it gets to the high school level and it becomes assault or harassment, it's discipline."

While prevented sexual harassment and assault as a whole is the number one priority, it is realistic to plan on ways of making students in the building feel more comfortable about sharing their story and talking action. Too many fall silent due to shame or confusion.

"[We] think it's about empowering students to be able to say 'This is not ok, here's the avenue with which I share that with," said the Counseling Department. "It telling them that this is an okay thing to talk about and that this is an okay thing to process. We say that about many other things so we need to say it about this."

The bonds that students make with each other and faculty members are important in every teenager's life. Everyone needs a trusted adult to talk to in their time of need, and CHS tries their best at attempting to provide each and every student with that very figure.

"[We] do think that we are fortunate in this community, and many students don't realize it, but students are fortunate enough to have relationships with all sorts of people––not just the counselors but with the teachers," said Counseling Department. "We all are in communication with each other. It's very rare for a student not to have some kind of cohort in the building where eventually, if there's some sort of problem, it will come to surface. And there will be a great deal of support."

For many CHS students, the next step after high school becomes college. Professor Dzuback is on the Sexual Assault Advisory board, and she hears out the cases of students at Washington University.

"you wouldn't be able to do anything"

It was seventh grade. I was probably 12, so pretty young. We were in the theater because there was play practice going on, and they were showing us a video on the projector screen. It was dark and I was sitting next to a boy. He ended up putting his arm around me and I was a little uncomfortable, because you know I was 12 and I didn't think about him like that at all. And then, he just slowly started reaching for my chest and we were completely in the middle of this dark auditorium. All my friends were around. I wanted to punch him in the face, but at that moment, I was just so paralyzed. I'm very closed off about my body and having somebody like try to violate that … I couldn't even comprehend what was going on until it started to happen. And I just wanted to not have him go any further. So I ended up just kind of slowly leaning forward and his arm just fell down and was touching my back instead. I sat that way the entire time, just in that position because I didn't want to risk going back.

Then the lights came back on. I still remember the music that was playing and I still remember where we were sitting. It wasn't even that big of a deal. I guess it doesn't seem like it was or anything, but it's still a violation of me and my body. I didn't end up telling anybody about it at first just because I was terrified. I guess I'd like talk to him about it. He was texting me later. And I was not having any part of it. He had such a low self esteem and didn't like the way he looked. I didn't really know what to say because I did not want to have any part of it.

It ended up is kind of dying out. I didn't really tell anybody about it. I think maybe a couple of my friends. Honestly, it was so long ago and it was just so early on. I had never had a boyfriend or kissed anybody. To just pretend like everything's okay the next day and still kind of have to be around him … I was always uncomfortable.

I didn't really know what a relationship was then. It just ended up being this weird event. I didn't tell my mom about it because I was afraid that she would just go and beat him up. I talked to my mom about those kind of things when I was young, and I feel that now, if something similar were to happen, I'd definitely reach out to her. It was just so new to me and so young and so violating that I didn't know how to approach it. He ended up later dating one of my best friends and I didn't tell her at all.

It's paralyzing. You don't know how to react. You don't know like they would react to how you react and in that situation, he had control over me. By not saying anything you give them that control and you give them that power over you. You shouldn't, but it's hard to tell yourself to punch him or smack him. In the moment, you really can't do anything. And I think that's just the nature of it. And no matter who you are, you wouldn't be able to do anything.

Anonymous
- CHS student

"college life"

This was at the very beginning of first semester. My freshman year. It was kind of a introductory period for college. You know everybody's gone wild, lots of drinking lots of just partying, not a whole lot of responsibility. It just seems like a 'no parents' kind of thing. So you have a lot of freedom with that, but that also comes with lots of responsibility. You're setting yourself up for a lot of failure and that's what happened. Thay was when I was first being treated for like mental illness and the big thing that any person with common sense should know not to mix this medicine with alcohol. But it didn't really come to me.

I remember taking my medication and then my friends a couple doors down were having a dorm party. We went over there and then had a couple drinks. I realized when it was too late. After like just a couple of drinks, I had already blacked out from like the medication and alcohol.

I was literally completely sober and then once the alcohol hit, I blacked out and then the next thing I remember is waking up next to a lab partner in her room. And the really, really weird part about it was that I couldn't remember anything and that I had ended up there somehow.

I was walking back super hungover, throwing up everywhere, feeling super sick, not only because like of the substances, but because of what was going through my mind regarding what happened.

This was like kind of when everything started to go into different directions. I didn't know how to explain it or tell anyone because I didn't know what happened. I asked the girl–apparently we did stuff and she said she was not aware that I was drunk, but talking to anybody who's been on alcohol and prescription meds at the same time, it's like impossible not to be able to tell that someone's absolutely messed up from that.

That was the first thing I told my girlfriend at the time and I couldn't live with myself because I had either cheated on her or been assaulted or something like that. And then after that we broke up because I didn't know what to do with myself.

Then I went to my SA and they said I could contact Dr. Jamie Ball, who is the Title IX director, which is against all assault and discrimination and all that in college. I called her and I told her about it and she asked if I wanted to press charges stuff like that. And then I talk to the girl that, I don't even know what to say about her, stuff happened with, and she literally told me that she heard that I'm going to the authorities with this. She said who are they gonna believe: you or me?

I felt like I had to drop everything. It's unfortunate because in that kind of situation they can believe the guy or the girl, but who's it going to end up being? So I had to like take my loss and learn from my mistake kind of thing. I put it down in 'college life' and all that. I can't really speak out about it.

Lawrence Hu
- CHS graduate

“I couldn’t even say no”

I was at a party off campus at a house and it was around midnight, and I had been drinking a ton. I had had maybe like eight or ten drinks. It was like honestly not that much; it wasn’t out of the norm, being a college student, but it was it was midnight, which was still pretty early. I was like ‘I’m too drunk, like I just want to go home.’

So I called an Uber and I told him I was with my roommate and so I told her I was going home, ‘I’ll text you when I get there,’ all that stuff, but I was also like blacking out a little bit, I wasn’t great.

Anyway, so I got in the Uber and the driver was young and kind of cute and I was in the backseat. I don’t really remember the ride very clearly, but I was talking to him and touching his arm and flirting with him a little bit, and then at some point he pulled the car over to the side of the road and got in the backseat and raped me, essentially, and it wasn’t violent. It wasn’t forced, I just had no idea was going on – I was completely out of my mind drunk, you know, so I like I didn’t realize the gravity of what was happening. And obviously, we didn’t use protection or anything like I didn’t even take off my dress.

Then he just got back in the front of the car and drove me back to campus; it was a 10 minute ride.

I got back to campus and I like texted my roommate that I just had sex with my Uber driver and she was freaking out and I went back up to my room.

The next morning my roommate sat me down and she was like, ‘Hey, we need to talk about what happened last night’ and I was like ‘it was nothing, like it wasn’t a big deal. It doesn’t matter.’

And she was like, ‘No, you were drunk, you didn’t consent because you were drunk, like that is assault’, and then I kind of started to grapple with it.

I was talking to my boyfriend and he was ‘that’s really messed up,’ and he was like very upset. He was like ‘he took advantage of you’.

About a week later I decided to go the police.

I’ve had a lot of guilt with it because it was so hard for me to process. I don’t remember what I said. I don’t know if I led him on or if I did consent. I have no idea.

And I know that since I was drunk, I couldn’t consent, but I don’t know. I was probably being confusing to him.

The whole thing with pursuing a criminal case, just the whole time I was really conflicted about it. It was horrible.

And then the criminal case ended up getting dropped because there wasn’t enough evidence, so the prosecutor didn’t even hear the case. I mean what evidence do they need? My friend saw me drinking, I know I had sex with this guy. I texted my friends right afterwards. That should have been enough to have a case, but it never went anywhere. So now we’re actually trying to pursue a civil suit against Uber for inadequate hiring and training.

I was really upset like because you know I’d already been blaming myself and feeling guilty, but still what had happened was a crime. I wasn’t sure and then to hear ‘we can’t charge him like this, there is not enough evidence,’ then all of a sudden I was back in that place of like maybe it wasn’t wrong, maybe it was my fault, like maybe I’m being dumb for even trying to do this.

It was like a terrible couple of months.

I still don’t feel like I’m totally good. Even when I’m talking to the lawyers sometimes I [wonder if] I’m just inflating this to something that it’s not. I feel bad about it or I worry about the perpetrator … how this is affecting him, even though that’s not my problem.

I always thought that I was someone that was really strong. I was like, this will never happen to me; I can always say no. And yet, just enough alcohol and suddenly I couldn’t even say no.

Anonymous
- CHS graduate

“What strikes me is the lack of communication and that’s what leads to these situations where people feel taken advantage of, abused, or they don’t understand what’s happened and they’re confused,” said Dzuback. “Men and women want more meaningful relationships, but they don’t know how to create them. They’re in this culture that’s putting pressure on them to rack up notches in their belts, but they’re not making meaningful connections.”

Without learning how to make these meaningful connections at an early age, students are often lost when they mature into adults looking for relationships. Universities and even high schools need to provide time and safe spaces to talk through their thoughts surrounding relationships.

“It should be direct and it should give kids places to talk and ask questions and get some answers and explore what this means,” said Dzuback. “That’s a way to intervene in this gender unequal interaction where women gay people and trans people are harassed because of their sexuality are taken advantage of, or abused or mistreated.”

One in five women and one in 16 men are sexually assaulted while on a college campus. 90 percent of these attacks go unreported. “A fairly high proportion of women have experienced assault,” said Dzuback. “We know less about men. There’s no place safe to talk about it except a psychiatrist’s office. Nobody should be afraid. They shouldn’t be afraid of guns, and they shouldn’t be afraid of being assaulted in our schools or on their campuses.”

Dzuback advice for students who are in the middle of the college selection process is as follows:

“When you get to campus look around for organizations that you can get involved with that do anti-assault and assault prevention training that offer opportunities to provide assistance and support for people who are assaulted. Educate yourself on the issue,” said Dzuback.

The students at Washington University were very involved in making their school a safer place. They started hotlines and made demands for sexual violence prevention professionals to be hired by the university.

“Students started an assault hotline for students to call in; they demanded that we get assault and violence prevention coordinator who is now directing the Assault and Violence Prevention Center on campus with two people working under her,” said Dzuback. “We now have a Title IX coordinator, who’s a lawyer that’s dealing with assault cases. This whole thing has grown out of student demands. Your institution responds to the situation and does something about it, and a whole range of education programs are created. Student activism is really critical. It’s your campus for four years. So try to do something about it.”

It’s not only your campus for four years––for some, it’s their home. Even though student activism can accomplish a great deal, it’s important to make sure that a college or university already has set rules in place that will keep you and other students safe.

“Make very clear and explicit in the school’s mission and ethical code and everybody shares it from the janitors, to the security officers, to the athletic directors, to teachers, everybody in the school––anybody who’s an adult––[make sure] they all understand that this is absolutely unacceptable at this institution,” said Dzuback. “They should all agree to it and all have some sort of training about how to intervene. Then you can train students on bystander intervention. Students are the ones who see what goes on in those crowds in the hallway and they can just say, ‘Hey, man. Don’t do that. I’m gonna have to report you if you do it again.’”

Punishment is important when dealing with these very perpetrators. There needs to be a change within the individuals themselves so that it can be insured that they won’t be a danger to others around them once their punishment has run its course.

“One of the most effective ways of getting people to examine their behavior is to hear other people share the pain of their stories, whether it’s an assembly or in smaller classroom size gatherings or in those kinds of venues,” said Dzuback. “You make sure those are safe spaces so people can say what they’ve experienced and what it left them feeling. Then you create penalties. People are suspended are kicked out. One of the ways to sort of enforce that is to have student governance. There’s punishment if somebody violates one piece of the code and you can have students participate in constructing the code.”

Student participation is a key part in how WashU handles its punishments.

“There’s a student jury who makes a decision. All of our committees have students on them,” said Dzuback. “Whether students are cheating or engaged in assault or anything like that.”

This very student involvement could help aid CHS students in their feeling of importance and fairness. College campuses are a place of learning and independence, but this next step in life comes hand in hand with a great deal of responsibility. Many CHS students will be heading to these campuses in the fall. Teaching teenagers what we can now is what schools can do to make the percentage of sexual harassments and assaults go down. According to Rape Response Services, 1 in five men will experience sexual violence in their lifetime. For women, the chances are 1 in 2. These statistics change based on how our children are educated.

the workplace

In 1963, President John F. Kennedy signed Executive Order 10925, which declared the responsibility of all corporations to “take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed and that employees are treated during employment without regard to their race, creed, color, or national origin.”

This executive order was the predecessor to the The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commision, created in 1965, which is a federal agency that enforces civil rights issues of discrimination in the workplace, often including lawsuits regarding sexual harassment and assault.

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commision defines workplace sexual harassment as:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual’s employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual’s work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Despite the fact that the Commision was signed into action well over 50 years ago, workplace discrimination is still carried out today, specifically in the form of sexual harassment.

In fact, 1 out of every 3 women ages 18-34 experience sexual harassment in the workplace, according to a Cosmopolitan Magazine survey confirmed by The Huffington Post.

“i just kind of let it go”

I taught English at a high school, just like I do here, and the principals at the high school were both male. For whatever reason during something one summer, we were back to school, as in teachers were all together. Back to school. The technology person was giving us instructions about new technology and she was being a little short and a little curt, and the principal of my building suggested that I should go over and take care of her needs because she was behaving like someone who hadn’t had sex in a while. And that she was being crabby and tense, and that it was probably something like she’d be less crabby if she had sex, and said that I should go investigate that. What you have to know is that I am not a lesbian, not that it matters that people are, but I am not. So I thought it was some weird thing, but kind of like laughed it off and said no, not my thing.

Several weeks or months later, there was a very similar situation with the librarian. The same principal said, ‘Why don’t you go and ask her what she needs? You should take one for the team and go take care of that for us so that she stops being so crabby.’ Again, I kind of ignored it, realizing, of course, that it wasn’t okay, but at this time, it was my first year in that building. I didn’t want to do anything that continued those kinds of comments. And finally, when I lost all my cool with it all, I said, ‘You understand that I don’t like girls like that, right?’ And his response was, ‘It doesn’t matter if it makes the work environment better. [You] should be willing to do it.’ And I said, ‘But no, because that’s insulting to me, to her and to lesbians everywhere.’

I took it to a colleague who had been in the district for a very long time. She said that that was just the environment here in the small town and we had to become accustomed to those kinds of jokes, because that’s the way the good old boys work. So I sat on it for a month and a half or two months and then took it to the superintendent, who suggested to me that he would look into it, but that maybe I should worry about things going on within my own classroom. At the time, I was the advisor to the newspaper, and there were people in our community who were unhappy with a thing we had published in the paper. The superintendent’s response was, ‘Sure, I’ll look into your complaint, but you need to stop upsetting the town with your newspaper.’

So, at that moment, I just kind of let it go and I resigned at the end of the year without a job, without job security, just hoping to find work. Then I came here in November of the following school year, when Dr. Cade resigned. So that’s how I ended up here. I was lucky.

Darcy Cearley
- CHS english teacher

Awareness of sexual assault and harassment has risen greatly with the flood of allegations against powerful men, such as Harvey Weinstein and President Trump.

A 2017 poll conducted by NBC and the Wall Street Journal that was posted directly following the outbreak of the Weinstein allegations reported that as of 2018, 48 percent of women have experienced sexual, verbal, or physical harassment, as printed in Time Magazine Online.

Additionally, the opening of the floodgates has made 44 percent of the women surveyed feel more inclined to speak out.

One reason that misconduct such as this has continued to go on for so long is because of the unseen shackles that prevent women from coming forward.

Often, women who try to report the incident or tell the perpetrator to stop are then penalized or threatened by their employer.

According to Dr. Andrea Friedman, Washington University professor of history and women's and gender studies, "One [way to prevent reports] is the quid pro quo. If you don't provide favors, they are going to fire you, you're not going to get a raise, etc, and the other is the creation of hostile work environment."

Credibility of the victims is often challenged when people wait many years to report incidents of assault and harassment, such as is seen in the allegations made by various women towards the President.

'What makes [sexual assault] so hard to report is that you start thinking , how much am I going to give up?" said Dzuback.

"they tried to belittle the talents that I had"

"I think it's about time. It was too easy for people to hide behind the secrecy of corporations and institutions. This [#MeToo] movement has lifted the veil and given women the security to speak out so that their voices will be heard," said Francine Katz, a former Chief Communications Advisor for Anheuser Busch.

Starting out as a young, ambitious female attorney, Katz climbed the ladder of success quickly, as she eventually became the first woman in the 150 year history of Anheuser Busch to join the Strategy Committee, a board of the 15 strongest executives in the company.

As Chief Communications Advisor, Katz went as far as testifying on the behalf of A-B before Congress, representing the company on national television and appearing in The New York Times. By the time the company was sold, she was ranked the 8th 'senior most executive'. However, as a woman soaring through the ranks of power, that meant facing her fair share of harassment and discrimination, some of which she did not realize until years later.

Katz described the company as having a "locker room mentality," complete with under the breath innuendos and steam-room meetings meant to exclude women.

All this aside, Katz was fairly well respected, or at least she thought she was.

"For the most part, and certainly among the strategy committee, I felt very respected. I was given tremendous responsibility. I mean, I was the company spokesperson with the news media. That's a pretty lofty position and that says that they trust that what I'm going to say will fairly justly represent the company, so I did not have any reason to suspect that I was not being fairly compensated because I certainly was given the responsibility," Katz said.

In fact, it was not until the company was sold and the federal Security and Exchange Commission demanded salary disclosure that Katz fully realized the gravity of the situation.

"It was at that time, when I saw the report, that I realized that I made less than every single man on the strategy committee––and the only person who made less than I did was the other woman," Katz said.

In addition to the salary gap, the company executives were grouped to determine, "compensation packages, which included stock options, extended health care benefits, all the long term compensation aspects that go with an exit package when people leave a company," Katz said.

"I found out that all the men on the strategy committee were in what was called 'Tier One' and Marlene, the only other woman on the strategy committee, and I were in 'Tier Two'. Now there were some men who did not work on the strategy committee who were in Tier One, yet Marlene and I [as members of that committee] were in 'Tier Two,'" Katz said. "And the reason we noticed it was that our extended healthcare benefits were less than what the men on the strategy committee were getting. They got [around] 36 months and we got 24 months. And so Marlene asked the general counsel why it was that we had gotten less in terms of extended health care benefits, and he said, 'Oh, that's because there are two tiers, and the other people are in 'Tier One' and you're in 'Tier Two.'"

Katz had been willing to overlook the sly, inappropriate comments that had been made to her, as the response was often, "Oh, that's just the way he is. I mean, if you're going to work here, you're going to have to tolerate that."

As a highly successful woman, she thought she had won the fight, but all that changed when she saw that she had been unwittingly working for decades under a discriminatory contract.

"I can't even begin to explain what a punch in the gut that was, to realize that all this time, I had thought that I broke the glass ceiling, I had mentored women in the company, I had told them 'Anything's possible, look at my career path! You can be whatever you want to be!'– only to find out that I had been discriminated against and that Marlene had been discriminated against. We both replaced men in our positions, and we both made far less than the men whose positions we had taken," Katz said.

That, for Katz, was unacceptable. She filed a lawsuit, which after five years of legal debacles finally went to trial in 2014. "I knew that I would never feel right about myself if I didn't speak up, if I didn't expose what happened," Katz said.

It has been seen throughout history that female accusers are often disparaged in order to discredit and diminish their importance and believability. Katz was no different.

"[The company] said, 'Listen, Francine it is a great executive, but she was only a PR person and this is all PR people make.' And that wasn't true. I was a vice president of public relations. I was a strategy committee member," Katz said. "They tried to belittle the talents that I had and tried to say that I was greedy and that I had made enough money. Well the thing is, if you can say after a certain amount of money that it is okay to discriminate, then I think that's a fundamental problem. You shouldn't be able to say about someone's gender, ethnicity or, sexual preference, 'Well, you know we'll pay them enough, but they don't have to be paid like everyone else in that they're making enough money.'"

After three weeks of incessant court appearances, the jury had come to a decision.

"In the end, I didn't win. When I came out of the courtroom. I said 'I'm disappointed, but I'm not sorry that I brought this lawsuit. You can't ever win if you don't fight.'"

Despite losing the lawsuit, Katz holds strongly to her belief that her case was impactful regarding the advancement of women's rights.

"A friend said, 'You might not think that you made a difference, but you can bet every CEO in America is going to meet with their HR person tomorrow and say what do our steps look like? We don't want to have to go through this, let's make sure that we're being fair,'" Katz said.

She truly does not see the case as a loss. Although the jury may not have recognized the pay gap as discriminatory, much of America did.

In addition, Katz recognizes that the women who came before her did not make it to the leadership levels of the company not because they were not qualified, but because they were not wanted.

Those women, along with women who fought for female advancement in society were limited by the patriarchy, but their efforts did not go to waste, and neither will her's.

"They were just up against the system that was unfair, and they blazed the trail for my generation and hopefully I'm blazing a trail for your generation," Katz said. "When you fight, you don't always win, and you just have to get up, pull yourself together, dust yourself off, and and move on. You can't let it make you bitter. You can't let it consume you. You move on."

Francine Katz

- Former Anheuser Busch Executive

"i did doubt my own perceptions"

I was working in a small law firm as kind of just an assistant. I wasn't a paralegal or anything like that. So I typed and took dictation, back when people did that. It was a law firm that had two main lawyers that were husband and wife. They were people who I knew because they were active in progressive reform. A lot of my job was taking dictation from the male lawyer and so I spent a lot of time in his office, just me and him.

One day, back in the early 80's, he asked me if I'd [perform oral sex]. And there are other things going on in the workplace. There was some drug use and stuff like that. It was a different time. I thought that maybe he didn't really mean it. Or maybe he just wasn't sober. Excuses went through my head. And so I said no, and then he seemed to repeat the request over and over. I said, 'You know, you need to stop doing this. And if you don't, I'm going to tell your wife,' and he got very angry. I had said that twice, and he told me to get over myself. He said, 'I heard you. We don't have to keep talking about this.'

He never admitted that what he did was wrong or anything like that. I felt like his getting angry about me saying no and 'you need to stop talking like this,' was geared to make me doubt my own perceptions of it all.

That was a really bad thing because I did doubt my own perceptions and spent a lot of time worrying about it and feeling really uncomfortable in my workplace. I was also really uncomfortable with his wife, my other boss, because I had this knowledge and I didn't know what to do with it. I left that job, partly for that reason, but for other reasons as well.

Then a friend of mine applied for the same job and she got it. I didn't say anything to her. A year later, she came to me and said, 'I've been feeling all this pressure from this guy.' So the same thing was happening to her. I felt so horrible that I had not said anything at the beginning.

Andrea Friedman

- Washington University professor

the relationships

Sexual assault and harassment also play out in relationships between partners. Whether a couple is dating, living together, or married, those in relationships can often muddle basic terms such as consent if not educated on the term at an early age.

When teenagers find themselves in relationships during their high school or college years, decision making is underdeveloped and emotions are heightened. In a survey done by the National Institute of Justice, it was found that 18 percent of teens report being sexually abused in a relationship. 12 percent admitted that they had abused someone that they were dating. This means that almost 1 out of 5 teens was sexually abused by a person that they trusted and cared about. This can easily lead to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and create difficulties for the victim when they are ready to enter a new relationship. Additionally, the perpetrators continue to behave in this same fashion throughout future relationships.

There was a study done that presented forced sex scenarios to a group of 237 students in a Louisiana public high school. 60 percent of the boys thought forced sex was acceptable in one or more of these scenarios. Another study done by a senior at a Seattle high school, who interviewed students for an AP Statistics assignment, found that 11 percent thought that is was okay for one person to force another person to have sex with them if they were in love. These very misconceptions are exactly the reason why education surrounding relationships, not just sexual health is so important.

"Quite often a relationship will start and it feels like a normal relationship," Dzuback said. "You become very emotionally attached to the person, the person seems to be emotionally attached to you. You like each other, you enjoy each other's company, and then these little things start happening. You suddenly realize that he doesn't like you going places by yourself. He doesn't want you to do things without him, with your friends. You have fewer and fewer friends with whom you're hanging out regularly. It's a process of isolation that happens initially, but those signs of isolation and sort of possession and control, those become visible."

Washington University Assistant Dean and Academic Coordinator of the College of Arts and Sciences and Senior Lecturer in the Women, Gender, and Sexuality Department Jami Ake also spoke about what sexual assault looks like in a relationship and how you could help a friend who is in that kind of negative situation.

"When you when you see an unhealthy relationship, an intimate relationship and they're friends of yours … It's really hard to say, 'I'll be there for you' without saying, 'there are strings attached' or 'I need you to leave [them]'," said Ake. "You have to find a way to be supportive without controlling this person's life. It's painful. It's one of the hardest things and it's sometimes it's just noticing this pattern."

Relationship abuse can be defined as a pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. Abuse is physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure or wound someone.

According to Loveisrespect.org, whose purpose is to engage, educate and empower young people to prevent and end abusive relationships, if you yourself feel that you are in an abusive relationship, aside from telling family and friends what has happened, you can find support groups, create a safety plan for yourself whether or not you're staying in the relationship, or you could create a protective order, which is a court order that prevents the abuser from contacting you, your friends, or your family.

Loveisrespect defines relationship abuse as, "a pattern of behaviors one person uses to gain and maintain power and control over their partner."

They go on to say that "many people assume abuse means that physical violence is happening, but that's not always the case. Abuse comes in many forms—it's not just physical. Each type of abuse is serious and no one deserves to experience abuse of any kind."

Emotional, verbal, digital, financial, stalking and sexual abuse are all different forms of relationship violence.

The organization says, "Sexual abuse refers to any action that pressures or coerces someone to do something sexually they don't

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"i was afraid to be a victim"

Before the #MeToo movement, I wasn't really clear on the parameters of the word "abuse." Only a few months ago, had someone asked me to define abuse, I likely would have just described it as "physical or emotional battery to another being."

I had never imagined that one day I would be sitting in the hospital telling the psychologist across from me: "I think I might be a victim of emotional abuse."

And it didn't start out that way, but that's how it ended up. I was 14, a freshman in high school and at the peak of my rebellious streak. In one of my extracurriculars, there was a junior boy. For the sake of anonymity, I'll call him T.

T was everything I wanted. Older, smarter, attractive, and a little dangerous. And when my parents met him, they hated him.

The two-year age gap didn't seem like much to me, but when it's 14 and 16, it sounds worse. That age gap created a power dynamic that initially I failed to recognize.

Our first kiss was only a week after we met, I was thrilled. He had a car, and would give me a ride home every day. It was truly the honeymoon phase.

Two weeks following the first kiss, T told me he loved me. Following my initial shock, I gushed it back. He'd found me in one of my personal lows, and his confession and general presence felt like a lifeline back to a happy reality.

Later, I would learn that while he was charming the hell out of me, he was also charming the pants off of two other people. I was the main event, but he held sideshows.

From the beginning of the relationship in April to about mid-June, things were great. We were young, happy, and in love. It was special. I left for a month during the summer, and when I got back, things had changed.

We had sex for the first time, my first time, and then we spiralled. That was all he ever wanted to do. He was more depressed. His insecurities ate away at him, and then at me because I was blaming myself for not being able to fix him. We never went on dates, and he only wanted to hang out at his house because he knew my parents didn't like him.

Every time I would go over, he would find something new to be upset about. He found comfort in the tears that I cried for him and used my body to ease his pain. I loved him, and I wanted him to feel better, so I always let it happen.

We eventually got to the point where if I didn't want to have sex, he would cry and tell me he told me that it felt like I didn't love him or want him. With guilt settled in my stomach, I would change my mind and let him do as he pleased.

Every fight we had ended up being my fault. I remember once we were sitting on the couch, I was scrolling through Pinterest. He began to melt down next to me, yelling about how all I ever did was meaningless bullshit.

He belittled me and boxed my existence into nothing but sex and bad habits that I couldn't quit. But I didn't know it, not then.

I used to be a singer. I did school musicals, I took voice lessons, I was in recitals. Once, I was singing along to a song in the car, and he made fun of the way I sounded.

Following that day, I never sung in front of him again, and my interest in singing slowly tapered off.

He stole the passions from my heart and forced himself into every empty cavity … I was in denial. I loved him, it was normal, he loved me.

He always begged me to break curfew, or sneak out. He would tell me to leave my phone at Kaldi's so my parents thought I was doing homework and then he would drive to an empty parking lot and we would have sex in the back of his car. I never really thought about whether I was enjoying it or not, but I wanted him to be happy. And that's what he wanted, so that's what I did.

We were together for about a year and a half. We broke up twice, once in June and then for the final time that following August. In the two weeks that we had been apart in June, he had slept with three other people. I had been crying in my room, leaving only once to sit with my friends in my living room. I had been crying in my room, and he was [having sex with] other people. And then he came back to me, told me he loved me, and I was back in his trap.

Once again, I was gone from mid-July to mid-August. When I got back, that was when he told me about all the cheating. It had been constant. He told me that almost every time he asked me to sneak out (and I never did) that after I said no, he would go and find someone else to have sex with. I remember crying so hard that I threw up.

I broke up with him, and he left for college.

Coming off of that breakup in the beginning of my junior year, I felt broken. All of my pieces were there, but they didn't quite match up. It took me over a year to realize that my experience hadn't just been a relationship with a bitter truth and a sad ending, it had been emotional manipulation. Abuse.

The #MeToo movement is the only reason I was able to recognize this. I began seeing articles and tweets and facebook posts about the stories of women who has been in situations where they were being manipulated so viciously that they didn't realize what was happening to that. The first time I related to one of those posts, I felt sick to my stomach.

I was afraid to be a victim. I was afraid to look anyone in the eyes and say "I have been in an abusive relationship."

Since our final breakup, T has reached out to me several times. I have reached out to him, as well. There is nothing beautiful about lost loves finding their way back to each other; I went to him because it was all I knew and he came to me because he wanted to feel the powerful high that he once knew. I never gave it to him again.

Only recently have I been empowered by my experiences.

In some cases, I wish that I could take that part of my life back. I wish that I could take back every tear I ever wasted on T, but at the same time, I know that had I not been in that relationship, I would not be anywhere near the woman I am today.

At 17, I can confidently say that I am a woman who will never let herself fall victim to any man, or woman, ever again. Through the lens of other stories, I was able to come to my senses about what had happened to me. Sharing my own experiences is difficult, I have never talked about it openly, but I believe that it is a tool of communication that will ultimately help other victims of abusive relationships empower themselves and hopefully realize the severity of their relationships.

Anonymous
- CHS student

want to do. It can also refer to behavior that impacts a person's ability to control their sexual activity or the circumstances in which sexual activity occurs, including oral sex, rape or restricting access to birth control and condoms. It is important to know that just because the victim "didn't say no," doesn't mean that they meant "yes." When someone does not resist an unwanted sexual advance, it doesn't mean that they consented. Sometimes physically resisting can put a victim at a bigger risk for further physical or sexual abuse."

The victim should never be blamed for any kind of sexual assault.

Even if they were wearing a provocative outfit and even if they had been drinking alcohol, it is still always the fault of the attacker.

"Some think that if the victim didn't resist, that it doesn't count as abuse," said loveisrespect. "That's not true. This myth is hurtful because it makes it more difficult for the victim to speak out and more likely that they will blame themselves. Whether they were intoxicated or felt pressured, intimidated or obligated to act a certain way, sexual assault/abuse is never the victim's fault."

In more committed relationships such as marriage, the laws behind sexual assault and rape are concerning and heartbreaking. Up until 1991, marital rape was not a crime in the state of Missouri.

One in 10 women will be raped by an intimate partner in their lifetime. The same is true for one in 45 men. This is brought on by the lack of knowledge surrounding proper consent.

A group of CHS students wrote a paper for their AP Language and Composition course titled, Consent: And a lack thereof.

This 45 page multi-genre paper defines consent and sexual harassment/abuse within short stories, poems, photographs, research papers and analyses. It was all based on the reading of the research paper Missoula which focused on the study of campus rape in the U.S.

Senior Rahul Kirkhope co-authored the paper.

"To highlight the societal issues that the United States has when addressing the dichotomy of the way men handle things, the way women handle things, and how the country addresses issues of abuse and rape and how rape is not taken seriously enough," said Kirkhope. "We see that people are quick to blame the victim. People are quick to blame the environment or the circumstances, rather than simply blaming the actual perpetrator. It's a shame to see that."

The CHS senior hopes that his paper will affect people in the way it affected him. He's found that our society today has some major issues surrounding how we handle sexual harassment and assault, especially in relationships.

"Our paper addresses multiple ways and hopefully ideas that could turn the tide in how we address rape as a culture, both systematically and on a personal basis. Knowing people that have actually gone through it, it's really upsetting to see how the people they looked up to after the fact. And quite frankly, it's embarrassing. It really angers me to see how we as a society address the victims of rape and sexual assault. And that needs to change."

moving forward

The #MeToo movement has allowed the victims of sexual assault and those who support them to stand up and share their stories.

The victims are asking for the world to just listen. They're seeking for people to listen to the word no, and not ignore it. They're demanding for education for the children of this country––education that covers more than math and science.

This movement recognizes that the kids in schools now will grow up to one day become the CEOs of the world. The celebrities. The employers. The presidents. And encourages educators to teach children right from wrong while they're still young enough to be swayed one way or another.

The victims have begun to call out those who are abusing their power. #MeToo stories are about giving voices to the voiceless.

The men and women who have shared their stories for this article want for others to know they are not alone.

The movement is saying that time is up for those who exploit the weaknesses of others and abuse their subordinates. The victims are declaring that time is up for sending students off into the world, not knowing how to function or act in a healthy, consensual relationship. This is the victim's time to share their stories.

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