



SAN FRANCISCO WOMEN AGAINST RAPE PRESENTS...



A YOUTH GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY ISAAC BROWN

TALKING ABOUT THE TOUGH STUFF: SFWAR'S YOUTH GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

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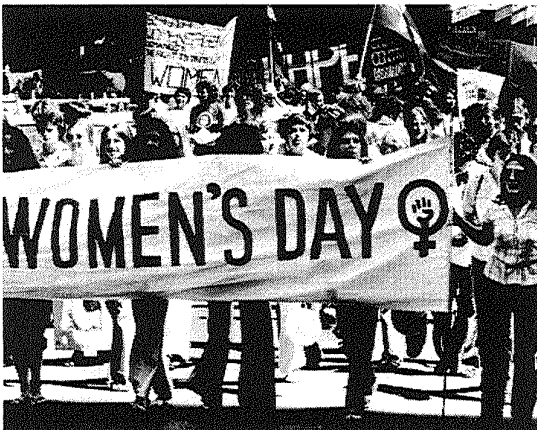
WHAT IS SAN FRANCISCO WOMEN AGAINST RAPE?

San Francisco Women Against Rape is an organization that supports people healing from sexual assault. SFWAR runs a hotline 415-647-(RAPE), counseling services, outreach, and workshops both to serve those who have been assaulted and to stop sexual assault from happening at all. Since we started and to this day, all of our services are free and confidential. SFWAR began in 1973, making it one of the oldest rape crisis centers in the nation. SFWAR has had a powerful role in the movement to support women and all survivors of sexual violence!

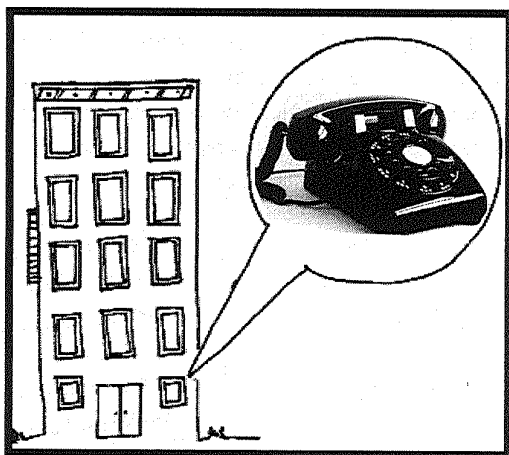
In the '70s, services for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and sexual harassment were almost non-existent. Survivors--mostly women--didn't have any clinics or rape crisis centers to go to get help or seek support from sexual violence. Things had been this way for a while, but with the women's movement during that time, women started to organize to support each other in different ways.

At the same time, the women's movement was marked by a divide in addressing issues affecting women of color, and most of the public voices in the movement were white. Today, SFWAR strives

to meet the needs of all survivors, especially those who experience multiple forms of oppression, including racism, sexism, ableism, and transphobia.



women's
march 1972



In the first years of SFWAR's hotline, volunteers staffed a twenty-hour/week phone service. The SFWAR office was in a basement apartment with a landline to take calls. One of the founders has talked about having to disguise SFWAR as a secretary agency for fear of being evicted from the building!

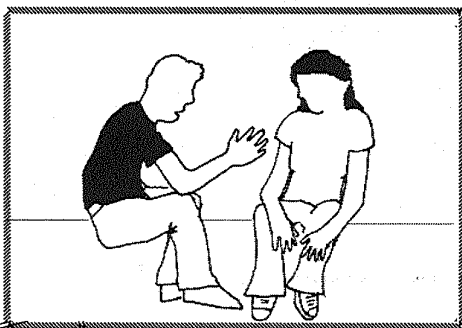
Now, we proudly march in the streets of San Francisco every year. We have many different programs including the Community Initiatives team that worked on this zine. Our hotline is still very active, with close to 100 volunteers answering the 24-hour hotline. We continue to try to support survivors all over the city, changing the way people think and talk about sexual violence so that rape and assault no longer exist.



SFWAR's walk
against rape 2008

WHY THIS GUIDE?

San Francisco Women Against Rape believes that sharing knowledge, information, and support among friends and peers is one of the most effective ways to grow and learn. That means that we want information to get passed along in an open way that feels real to people. This guide was created to be a way to get some basic information across, and open up discussions about sexual violence, healthy relationships, and what you can do to promote positive change in your community.



After I heard what other people thought and had experienced, I realized I wasn't alone in this.
—SF support group participant

I learned a lot from what everyone else had to say And from how people listened to me.
—SF Peer Educator

What do I do with this?

Whatever you want! This guide is meant to be a place for you to reflect on these topics and learn new things. Read it, write in it, share it, hide it, do what you do! There's some heavy stuff in here, so make sure you take care of yourself if some of the topics give you a lot to think about.

SPREAD THE WORD...

Ask a friend what they think

Link some info on your Facebook

Check out YouTube vids on the topic

Make your own movie on something that struck you

Do a fundraiser for a cause that interested you

What do you think would create the most buzz?

So now that we've talked a little bit about who made this zine, why it's out there, and some of the big picture of confronting sexual violence, let's talk more about some of the nitty-gritty. Like sexual harassment. What is sexual harassment? And how do we deal with it??

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Dear SFWAR
My friend always talks about how he's turned on by what I wear and tells me these stupid gross jokes all the time. Is that sexual harassment? He never touches or grabs me or anything, so I wasn't sure.
--Just Wondering

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT IS
ANY UNWANTED SEXUAL
BEHAVIOR OR CONDUCT**

Dear Just Wondering,
A lot of people hear that sexual harassment is only when someone does something physical, like grabbing.

Actually, there's three very common forms of sexual harassment, and physical harassment is just one of them. There's also visual harassment, like showing someone an inappropriate picture or pornography, and verbal harassment, which is what your friend is doing.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT CAN BE...

VISUAL

Showing porn magazines,
film, or internet sites

Sexual graffiti

Sexual drawings or images

Texting inappropriate images

Sexual messages or posts
on Facebook or Myspace

VERBAL

Yelling sexual comments

Spreading rumors

Asking about someone's sexual
experience

Asking for sexual activity

Calling someone more than they
want you to

Talking about looks or clothes
inappropriately

PHYSICAL

Grabbing

Blocking someone's way

Touching inappropriately

Snapping bras or boxers

Hugging without
permission

HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT is a place where there's harassment happening on a regular basis, and has been come so common it seems normal. It doesn't have to be directed at you...if your friend or coworker is being harassed, that's illegal too!

QUID PRO QUO is Latin for "this for that." Quid pro quo is if someone gives you something in exchange for harassing you - like better grades for not telling anyone a teacher flirts with you. This is harassment (and illegal) even if you agree to the "deal"!

Dear SFWAR,
I was just flirting with this girl, and
next thing I know, I'm in detention
after school and the teacher says
it was sexual harassment. Maybe I
was coming on strong, but I thought
girls liked that. I'm not trying to be a
harasser...what's going on?
--Swear I'm Innocent



Dear Swear,

Okay, so it sounds like you weren't intending to hurt this girl, which is a good thing.

But, as I'm sure you know, sometimes we do things even if we don't mean to. To you, it might have felt like flirting, but if it felt to this girl like harassment, that means it was harassment. What does that mean for you? It doesn't mean you're a bad person, but it does mean your behavior needs to change if you want to have good relationships with the people around you (and stay out of detention). Apologies, if they're sincere, usually go a long way. Also, pay attention to how what people are saying when you think you're flirting—they'll probably let you know if they feel harassed. Listen, and change!

I've never seen harassment happen, and it's never happened to me...do people just make this up?

GOOD TO KNOW

A 2003 report showed that **83% of girls 8th-11th grade** have been sexually harassed, and **73% of guys**. **Over a third** of those students had been harassed by teachers! Some people say they never feel safe at school because of sexual harassment.

A lot of people never talk about it, but sexual harassment is a huge deal.

WHAT'S THE STORY?

SEXUAL HARASSMENT STORIES FROM YOUTH

Shawna's math tutor, a freshman in college, is always sitting just a little too close to her, even when she scoots away. He comments on her hair, makeup, and asks if she has a boyfriend yet.

This is sexual harassment.

This is: (circle) VERBAL VISUAL PHYSICAL

A teacher returns a paper with a note on it. "I was really into this paper. You're more than just a hot girl!" Later, he offers her extra credit for helping him after class.

This is sexual harassment.

This harassment is: (circle)

HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT or QUID PRO QUO

Your friends tell you this great story about this girl who is always doing crazy stuff at parties. You pass it along...after all, it is hilarious, and it's not like she's a friend of yours or anything.

This is sexual harassment.

This is: (circle) VERBAL VISUAL PHYSICAL

Every day in the guy's locker room, John's classmates tease him about being a virgin. Any time he talks to a girl in school, the same guys jeer and laugh at him.

This is sexual harassment.

This harassment is: (circle)

HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT or QUID PRO QUO

Check your answers in the back!

STORIES OF STEPPING UP!

In 1983, a major court case in the U.S. ruled that any public organization (that means schools and universities too!) would be held responsible if harassment happened. That means it's your school's job to stop harassment. If you're being harassed, it's the school's job to make it stop--you don't have to do it alone!

I was really close with this one teacher at school--he'd helped me a lot when I was going through a hard time. But then stuff starting getting weird. He'd invite me over to his house, or talk about his girlfriend with me. I was really uncomfortable, but I really didn't want to get him in trouble. Finally, I had to say something. I talked to another teacher. Later, I found out he'd been doing that with other students too! It was hard, but in the end, I'm glad I spoke up.

This guy was always teasing me, talking about my clothes, hair, butt, whatever. I'm a shy person and had no idea how to tell him to stop. I told one of my friends, and he said he'd help next time it happened. Sure enough, next day the guy starts calling at me down the hallway. My friend turned to him, told him to stop acting like a fool and have some respect. It worked! If you don't think you can do it yourself, ask your friends to help you out!

Do you harass people? Are you harassed?
What would it take for harassment to stop?
What's your story?



I'm harassed all the time at school – even by teachers sometimes! – I don't know if anyone will listen or believe me ...

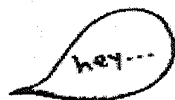
TAKING STEPS

It's hard to speak up, but really important. It's not only for your safety, but because other people are probably experiencing it too. Here are some suggestions to stop the harassment.

1

Talk to the person.

Be clear that they are harassing you and it needs to stop.



2

Speak to someone who has authority in the situation.

If a student is harassing you, find an adult who you like and trust to talk with. If a teacher, coach, tutor, or other adult is harassing you, speak to someone who is in charge of them.

Reach out to family if that can support you, too.

3

Find someone who can listen. Friends are really important in tough times! If you can, find a friend will listen and support you. Think about asking them along to some of the other steps as well.



4

Know that this isn't your fault. Harassers will often say they harass because of something you do – how you dress, what you say, etc. If you're being harassed, it's never your fault.



"I see sexual harassment everywhere at my school. I can't walk down a hall or almost talk to anyone without it happening. I can't care anymore ... cuz if I did, there wouldn't be anywhere to go." – SF Student

TALKING ABOUT RAPE

We've had a chance to talk about sexual harassment, how it looks, and how to talk about it. Sexual harassment often creates a culture or vibe that certain things are okay and no one's going to do anything about it... like some guy can grab a girl and no one will say anything, or it's okay to talk about sexual stuff at a job since no one ever seems to care. Not only does that culture mean there's sexual harassment, it is also a foundation for other forms of sexual violence, like rape, to also "be okay."

I'M NOT SURE
WHAT YOU MEAN
WHEN YOU SAY
RAPE... HOW ARE
YOU SURE WHAT
IT IS?



IS IT
CONSENT?

check it
out!



and Sexual Assault

If folks have had sex **before** and are about to again, but one person says "Not tonight!" **Even though they've done it before**, this time it's a...



If two folks are getting together, and one stops to put on a condom and the other says "I changed my mind!" **Even if they were ready earlier**, now it's...

If anyone is **too intoxicated** to make decisions easily (that means any sort of drunk or high!) **they can't really give a ...**

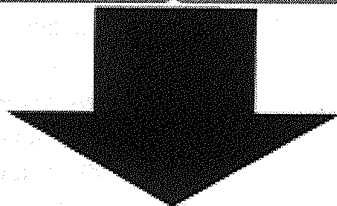


If anyone is **convincing** someone to have sex in order to keep a job, get a raise, or for any sort of "deal," **even if they agree** to the "deal," it can still mean...



If one person is using their **power** or influence, like a **teacher, coach, parent's friend**, or mentor to encourage sex, that is a...

If you ask if someone wants to have sex and they just **laugh, giggle**, say, "I'm not really sure," or is **just silent**, that's a...



NO!

**ALL THESE SITUATIONS AND ANY SITUATION
WHERE A PERSON IS NOT ABLE TO GIVE
TRUE AND FULL CONSENT CAN BE
CONSIDERED RAPE.**

That might be what you say...but I've heard different! Let's look at...

MYTHS ABOUT RAPE



MYTH: If a girl is wearing **sexy clothes**, she's partly responsible if she gets raped.

FACT: Rape is **not** about someone wanting sex or being **turned on** – it's about one person using **violence** against another person. Often people try to justify rape and **say it's the survivors fault** by using this excuse. In reality, people are raped wearing overalls or skirts, boots or high heels.

MYTH: People rape because they really **really want to have sex** and can't.

FACT: **Rape is a tool of power.** Rape is not the same as sex, and it's not about sex. It's about controlling people using sexuality as a tool.

MYTH: Rape is usually committed by a **stranger** attacking you at night.

FACT: **75% of all rapes** are by someone the survivor knows. Rapes most often happen in a familiar place, and about as often at night as during the day.

MYTH: Rape usually happens between two people of **different races**.

FACT: The stereotype that men of color are rapists is an exploited and **vicious tool** that has been **used in the media** for decades. In reality, almost all rapes happen between people of the same race,.

MYTH: Men are only **raped in prison**.

FACT: **1 in 6** boys under 18 experience sexual assault, and **1 in 33 men** have been assaulted. Though statistically, women are assaulted almost twice as often as men, men are survivors of assault as well. Men and boys are typically assaulted by other men, often from friends and family members

MYTH: Some women **make up** that they've been raped to get money or attention.

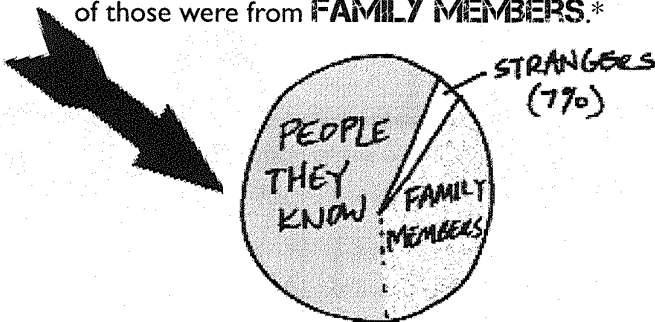
FACT: The FBI estimates that less than 2% of reports of assaults are false. That means almost 98% of the time that someone says someone raped them, they're telling the truth. Denying people's experience of sexual assault is one of the ways that our society allows a culture of sexual violence to exist.

WHAT ARE SOME OTHER FACTS?

Well, the truth about sexual violence is pretty big. For instance, **1 IN 4** young women under 18 have experienced sexual assault, and **1 IN 6** young men under 18 have as well.*



93% OF RAPES to young people are from people they know, and **35%** of those were from **FAMILY MEMBERS**.*



Compared to people who have not experienced assault, survivors are **26 TIMES** more likely to **USE DRUGS**, and **13 TIMES** more likely to **ABUSE ALCOHOL**.*

ALL of us are affected by sexual assault, whether we are survivors or our friends or and family are. Regardless of our personal history, all of us are affected by this violence.

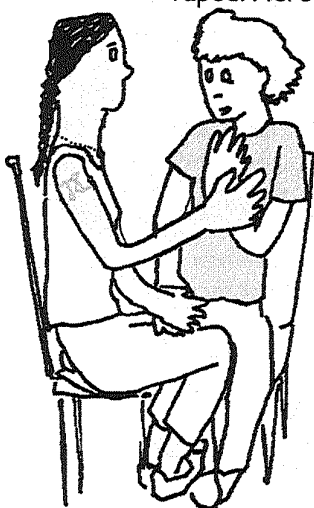
*citations in back!



My friend just told me she'd been assaulted by her brother's friend!! I know this guy...I can't really believe it...What do I do??

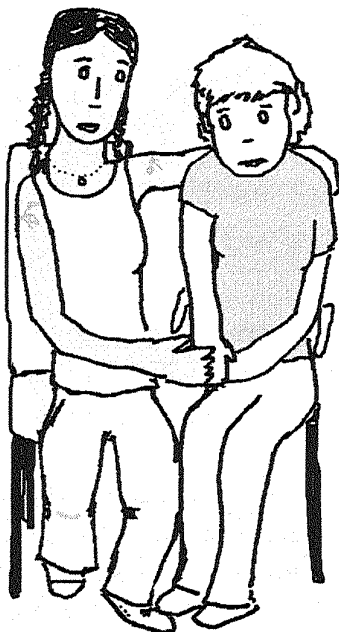
SUPPORTING SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

It can be hard to know what to do if someone tells you they've been raped. Here are some things to keep in mind:



ONE: BELIEVE THEM. A lot of people react with denial, saying it isn't true, or downplaying the experience like it wasn't really that bad. The first step is just to take it in and trust that they're telling you the truth.

TWO: LISTEN. Most people want to figure out **right away** what to do- go to the police! Call the hospital! Tell everyone you know! The best thing to do is **listen to the survivor**. Hear what **they** want, not what you **think** they should want. Some people might disclose many years after it happened. It's still really important to listen even if it happened a long time ago!



THREE: SUPPORT their choices, even if you don't agree. It's really important to **stand by** the person. Survivors **all have different ways of healing**. Some people talk, some people don't. Some go to the police, some never would. The **best** thing to ask is... "What way can I support you?" If they don't know...that's okay!



Friends and family are usually the survivor's **most important** resource after an assault. Make sure to **take care of yourself too** so that you can be your best! Don't forget-- **you don't have to solve the problem...** you just have to be there!

SOME OTHER IMPORTANT INFO

SFWAR's Rape
Crisis Line is
open 24/7

647-RAPE (7273)

• It's best for
• evidence
• collection **not**
• to shower
• after the
• assault until
• there is a
• hospital visit!

After an assault, it is best
to go to the hospital within
SEVENTY TWO hours.

This allows for **evidence**
collection if needed, and for
any **necessary medication**
to be most effective.



speaking to the police is the survivor's
choice...the survivor never has to report to
the police to use these services

More resources in the back!



OKAY... SO I GET A LOT
MORE ABOUT RAPE AND
HARRASMENT AN' STUFF...
BUT I ALREADY GOT PLENTY
TO THINK ABOUT! SEE, I'M
TALKIN TO THIS GIRL...

YEAH! I'M TALKIN TO
THIS DUDE, AND AT
FIRST THINGS WERE
REAL COOL, AND
THEN HE STARTS IN
WITH ALL THIS
STUFF ABOUT
'HOW I'M HIS WOMAN
AN STUFF... LIKE
WHAT??



Healthy Relationships

Whether you've been dating for awhile or aren't interested at all, it's important to figure out how to safe in relationships. What makes a relationship healthy? What happens if there's violence in your relationship?

Students weigh in...
What makes a healthy relationship?

love

TRUST

both people get to make the
decisions about what they do

YOUR
FRIENDS
LIKE THEM

honesty--no lies or
secrets

communication

mutual respect

lots of texting

your parents

meet them

no teasing or
put-downs

you talk about how you feel

good listening

going out a lot

-S.F. Students Brainstorm

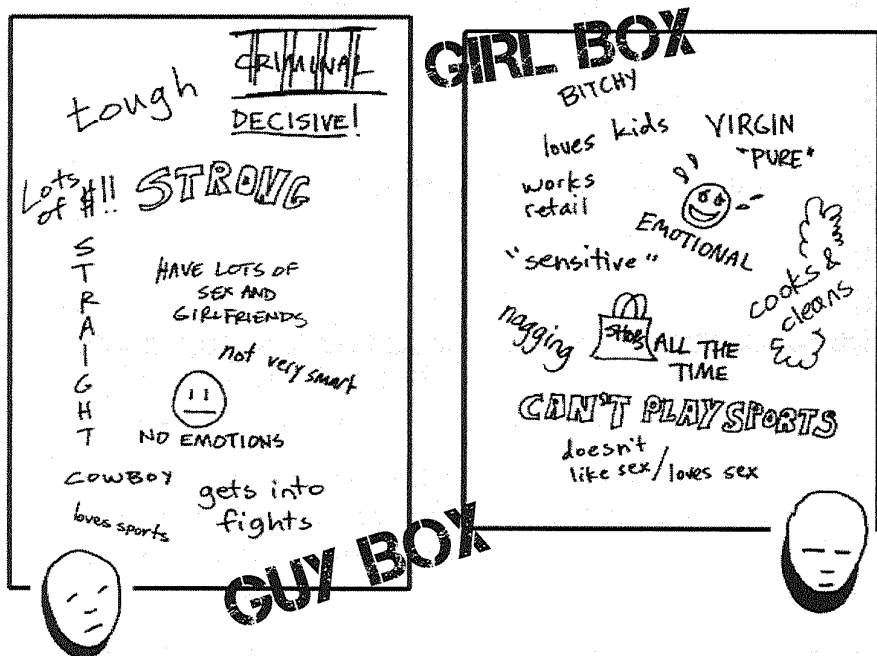
-
- What do you think makes a healthy relationship? One thing
 - we do know is that one in five high school students say they
 - have been in abusive relationships. That's a lot! So knowing
 - about what is healthy and what isn't is pretty important.
-

“ I thought what I was going through
was pretty normal. We fought, sometimes
it got out of hand and violent, but then
we made up. It wasn't until I finally talked
to someone about it that I realized that
was not normal or okay. ”

Another warning sign for unhealthy relationships are when gender roles are a big force in deciding who can do what in the relationship.

WHAT ARE GENDER ROLES?

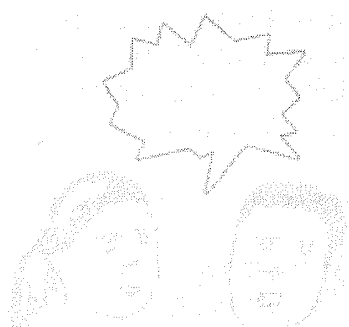
Gender roles are the ways we're expected to act based on our gender (or what people think is our gender.) During a Healthy Relationships workshop, some SF students filled in the "man box" and "woman box," showing the expectations of what girls and guys are "supposed" to be. The box represents how we get locked into being a certain way based on gender roles.



The thing is, most of us are told how we're "supposed to act" because of our gender. Whether it's being good at sports, or not having feelings, there are messages being told to us all the time. But gender is never cut and dry, and how we act is a range of different things on a scale of masculine, feminine, and in between. In this zine, we're showing only two gender options (male and female) to highlight that is one of the ways that we are confined as well. The gender binary systems says there are only two ways we "can" be, as oppsed to a wide range of gender identities!

Often times, these gender roles can play into our relationships. Here are some examples:

JEALOUSY




Tamara finds out her boyfriend has been reading her text messages on her phone. Her boyfriend flips out when she confronts him, and tells her that a good boyfriend has a right to be jealous, and girls can't be trusted anyway. He tells her that she can either "respect him, or be done with him."


EXPECTATIONS

Jason gets upset with his boyfriend, Sean, for "acting too gay." Jason hates it when Sean goes to dance class, and tries to make him wear different clothes. He says, "I'm not trying to date some fairy. You better man up." Sean just wants to be himself, but doesn't want to lose his relationship.

POWER



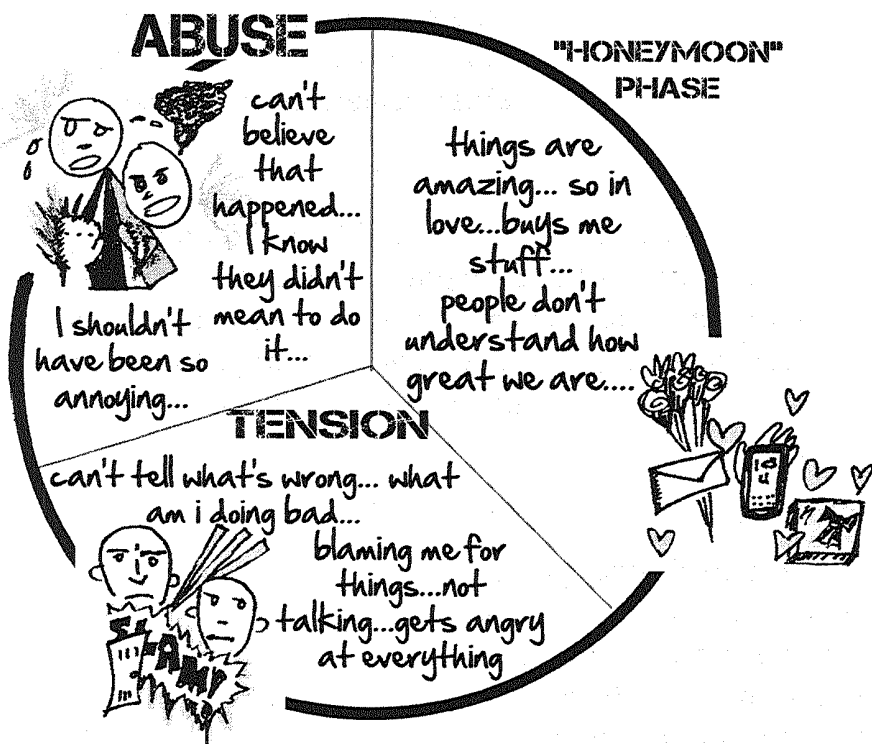
Enrique really likes this girl Rosa, who is into skating like he is. He's never met a girl who is so confident and can do a 360 flip! When he starts talking to her, his guy friends give him a hard time. One guy says, "You know she'd have you whipped, man. You don't want to be with some girl who's more macho than you!"





Okay! That gender roles thing makes a lot of sense. I think that's what's going on between me and my guy. But why is he getting so intense about everything?

Close relationships bring up a lot of big feelings, and most of us struggle with trying to manage. Check out this chart:



The thing about this cycle is that it goes on and on and on. After the abuse comes the honeymoon, and then the abuse begins again. What does change, however, is the intensity of the abuse. And, as time goes by, it takes less and less time to move through the cycle. The violence may begin as verbal exchange, and then escalate, or get worse, into a physical altercation. Unless the cycle is stopped and replaced with a healthier way of communicating, it will continue and worsen.

A NOTE ABOUT SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

One way that unhealthy relationships can play out is in the way that the couple relates to sex. Even if two people are in a relationship, consent needs to happen in sex all the time. Sex is a common way that people can try to control, manipulate, or take power from another person. In healthy relationships, sexual boundaries (*I don't want to have sex, I don't want to do this activity, I only want this kind of activity*) are respected and appreciated. Whatever types of sexual activity happen in a relationship, all of it should be fun, feel good, and be safe!



Let's talk about the things that go into healthy relationships, and ways relationships can get healthy or unsafe. One thing that can happen in unhealthy relationships is that sometimes we confuse things that seem like a good thing when they are actually not too great.

Check this out...

LOVE IS... BUT CONTROL IS...

Calling to say hey and talk

Talking about feeling a little jealous

Wanting to meet your friends.

Talking about feeling upset, confused, hurt or angry.

Spending time on things they enjoy.

Being honest about what they're hoping for in sex.

Telling you how great you are!

Feeling frustrated with stuff in their life and telling you about it.

Calling excessively to see where you are and who you're with

Demanding you stop seeing certain people or talking to people.

Telling you which friends are okay for you to hang out with.

Acting out feelings of anger with violent activity, name-calling, or "punishments."

Ignoring you intentionally-- playing "hot and cold."

Pressure or manipulation to do things sexually.

Criticism, suggestions on how to look better, jokes or teasing about how you look or act.

Blaming you for their problems, Saying things that are hard are your fault.

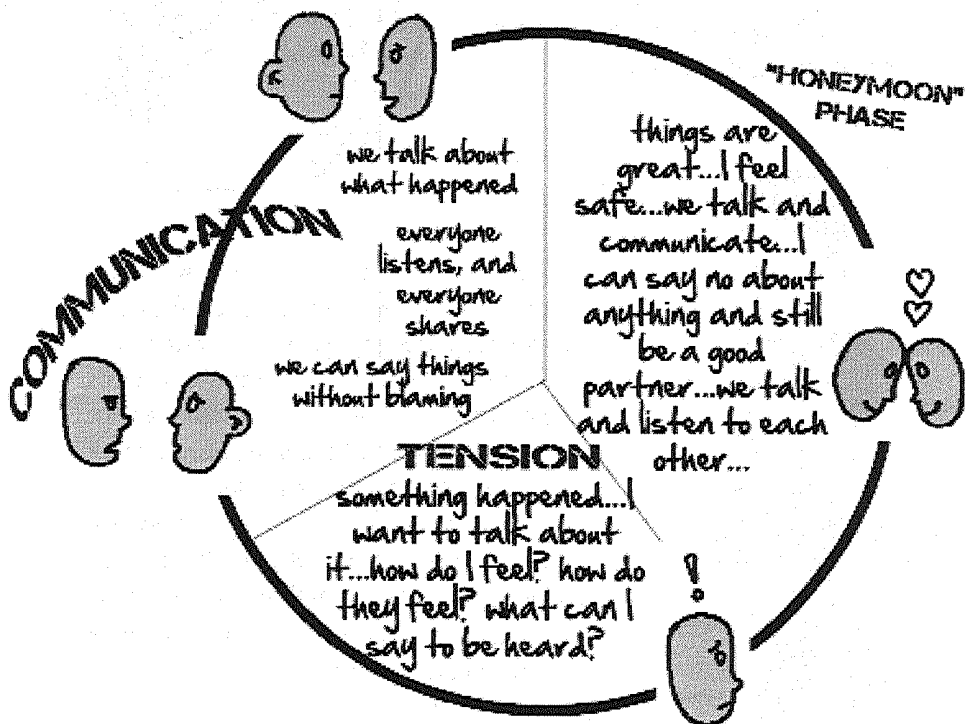


Now,
all this is intense. I
mean, I definitely yell at
my girl when things are
messed up, but I don't think
that's abuse. And I don't know,
it seems to work out okay in
the end.



Usually we do try
to work things out,
but a lot of the
time, that means
we ignore feelings
until they blow up!

But it sounds like you're trying
to handle things skillfully. Here's
another chart ... it's about how
healthy relationships move
through difficulty.





You know...some of the stuff about unhealthy relationships sort of fits for me. What does that mean?

if your relationship is unhealthy...

trust

your instincts. If you don't know if your relationship is good for you, it probably isn't. Good relationships feel good and feel safe.



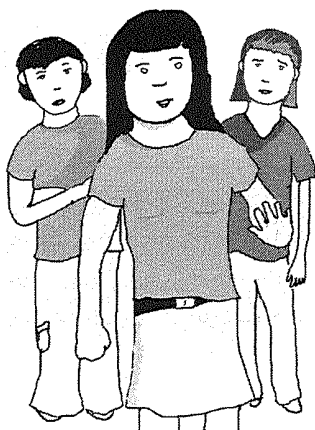
find

supportive people to talk to. And talk to them! It is **healthy** to talk about any relationship...to get advice, ask questions, and find community. Sometimes friends don't listen to us if we talk about something difficult. Adults might not think that your relationship is as deep and real as it is for you. Find the people who will listen and respect you. Remember: abuse comes in many forms. If there isn't physical abuse, that doesn't mean there isn't other serious abuse going on.



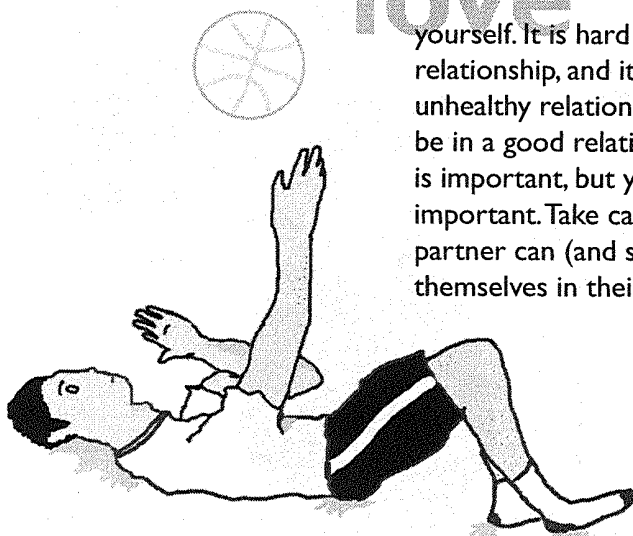
create

a safe way to leave the relationship. If you want to stay, develop clear and specific things that you need and that will change. Make a deadline for things to change--if they don't, stand firm and take a break. Lean on your support network, and take care of yourself. Let your feelings cycle through. Remember that it's better to be safe and single than unsafe and partnered!



love

yourself. It is hard to be in an unhealthy relationship, and it's hard to leave an unhealthy relationship. You deserve to be in a good relationship. Your partner is important, but you are the most important. Take care and be safe! Your partner can (and should) take care of themselves in their own way.

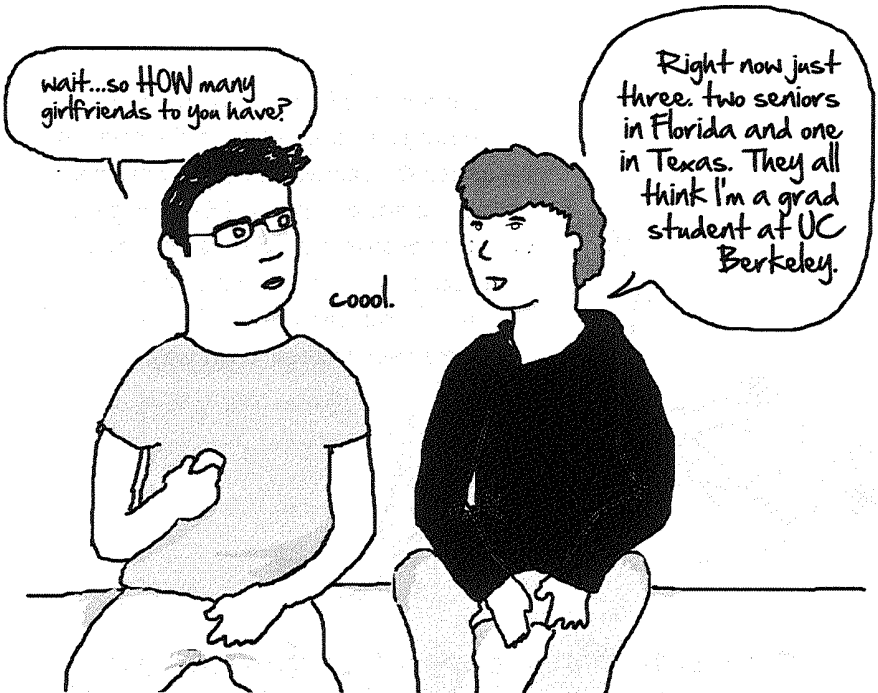


For more info or support on figuring out relationships, check out Love Is Respect's by-youth-for-youth hotline 24/7 at 1-866-331-9474.

Check out the back of this zine for SF and national resources too!

INTERNET AND

So, we just saw a little about developing healthy relationships with communication and trust. During our lives, communication and relationships have taken a totally new turn . . . they've become virtual.



It can be difficult to figure out what people are up to in the virtual world. Someone could block your messages and you could think they're upset, but really it was their little sister playing on the family computer. Or, you could have a really intimate relationship with someone, but have never seen their face.

TECHNOLOGY VIOLENCE



Since communication is so easy, and there's a lot of anonymity (meaning folks don't know who you really are) the internet opens up a lot of opportunities for unhealthy relationships.

"Technology violence" is a term used for when people use the internet, chat rooms, digital media, or other technology to do unsafe and unacceptable things to other people.

Examples

of technology violence

Sending inappropriate images

Links to pornographic videos or images

Unwanted sexual writing or videos

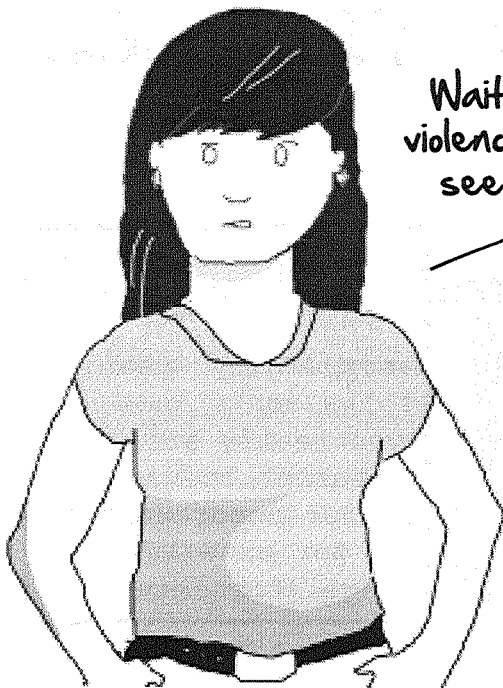
"Sexting" without consent

Texting sexual images or video

Posting inappropriate images to sites

Sexual webcam activity

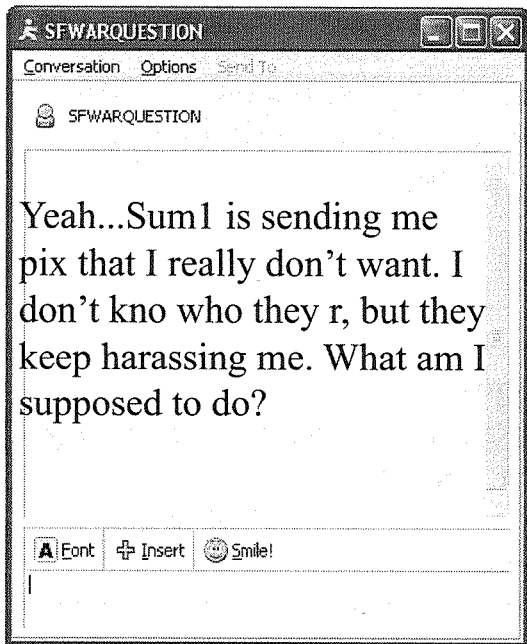
Stalking by email or social networking

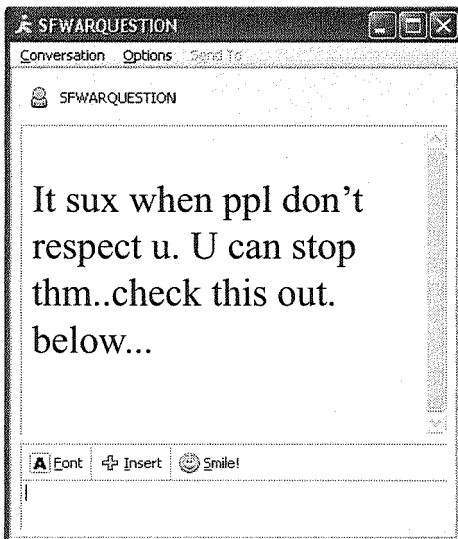


Wait! Is all of this stuff tech violence? Because I've definitely seen other people doing it ...

GOOD TO KNOW

All pornographic images, digital or not, are illegal if you're a minor. Sexual images, language, or video is all illegal until you are over 18. **And any images of anyone under 18 is always illegal.** Always. It doesn't matter if you're also under 18. Two 17-year old students in New York were charged with possessions of child pornography in 2008 because they had sent each other graphic images of themselves. While you can definitely make the right choices for yourself, make sure you know how the law can impact you and others!





It is challenging to address tech violence, but there are steps in place to help make the behavior stop.

steps to stopping tech harassment

1. Firstly, clearly tell the person they are harassing you and you want them to stop contacting you.
2. **Block** the user and username from your networking sites. Block their number with your cell phone service.
3. **Let the site management know** that you are being harassed. Most sites have harassment policies and consequences already in place.
4. **Print out copies** of conversations, emails, or messages that include harassment.
5. If you know who this person is and they attend school with you, **you can take the evidence** of harassment to a **school authority**. San Francisco schools all have policies that include consequences for virtual harassment, even if it happened outside of school hours.
6. **Change** your email, contact information, and passwords.

Conversation Options Send To...



SFWARQUESTION

Remember that online communication can have serious consequences offline.

Any details like your full name, address, and phone number gives people ways to access information about you that you can't control.

Never give out your full name, address, or phone number

Never give individuals any credit card number or financial information.

Always protect any private information online, no matter how much you trust the person you're communicating with.

Once something goes online, it is out of your hands. Think twice before posting images of yourself or others. It may not matter now, but it could seriously affect your future.



Font



Insert



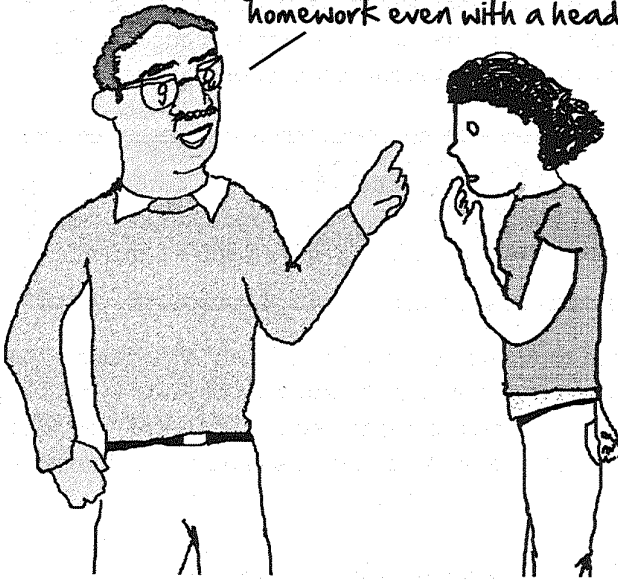
Smile

|

Do you know who else reads your profile?

Sure, your friends check your status every other minute, but **employers, family friends, and college administrators** all have access to your pages as well. Many people have **lost jobs** or even **admission to college** based on information about themselves on social networking sites.

I noticed your status this morning was "hella hungover from last night." I hope you were still able to finish up your homework even with a headache!



So...what's the current status after learning all that info?



San Francisco Women Against Rape

is helping make sure that safety and respectful boundaries are available online and offline. For more info about cyber violence, check out cyberangeles.com or www.cyberbully411.org

👤 16 minutes ago · Comment · Like

Write a comment...

OPPRESSION AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

We've talked about a lot of different forms of sexual violence so far in this zine. In what ways are they **connected**? In what ways are they different?

At SFWAR, we believe that a **core piece** of understanding and stopping sexual violence is recognizing the underlying systems that allow sexual violence to happen. When we talk about these systems creating barriers for people, preventing healing, and encouraging violence, we're talking about different forms of oppression.

OPPRESSION

is defined as the **EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY** or power in a burdensome, **CRUEL**, or **UNJUST** manner.

Most of us are used to talking about different “isms” like racism, sexism, or homophobia in terms of the more **blatant**, or obvious, things people do like **name-calling** or threatening someone because of their identity. In reality, **there are a lot of different levels that these “isms” play out.**

Do you know about icebergs?

A funny thing about icebergs is that **2/3 of the iceberg is under water.** We can talk about oppression in this way also – that **we see about 1/3 of it** blatantly, like calling names or teasing. But that **the deep stuff**, the stuff that makes it big and strong, **is under the surface.**

CHECK OUT THIS ICEBERG!



Here are some examples of the different levels of oppression that can play out in our lives:

PERSONAL

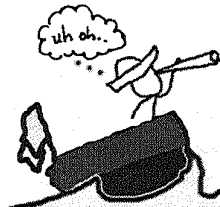
BETWEEN ONE OR A GROUP OF PEOPLE, ATTACKING ON A PERSONAL LEVEL

TEASING AND BULLYING

VERBAL INSULTS

PERSONAL PREJUDICE

JOKES ABOUT CERTAIN PEOPLE



INSTITUTIONAL

AN INSTITUTION IS A BIGGER SYSTEM, LIKE A HOSPITAL, CHURCH, OR SCHOOL

MILITARY HEAVILY TARGETTING YOUTH AND POOR NEIGHBORHOODS

ACCESS TO SERVICES- NO PUBLIC TRANSIT OPTIONS, LOCATIONS ONLY IN SOME NEIGHBORHOODS

POLICE TARGETTING AND JAILING MAJORITY PEOPLE OF COLOR

SCHOOL CLINICS NOT OFFERING SERVICES SPECIFIC FOR YOUNG WOMEN

ENGLISH-ONLY "PUBLIC" SERVICES

MEDIA STEREOTYPES

RELIGIOUS DOCTRINE

CULTURAL STORIES OR MYTHOLOGIES

HEAVILY REPORTED OR CENSORED NEWS

CULTURAL

SOCIAL "NORMS" OR IDEAS OF WHAT'S RIGHT, WRONG, APPROPRIATE, OKAY, OR TYPICAL

LET'S LOOK AT ALEJANDRA'S STORY TO SEE IF WE
CAN BREAK DOWN SOME OF THE WAYS OPPRESSION
WORKS IN OUR LIVES.

Alejandra, a Latina youth living in the Mission, was sexually molested by her uncle¹. She wants help, but her school doesn't offer services in Spanish², and she doesn't feel that confident with English. There are some youth services she knows of, but none of them have rape crisis services³. She knows she could talk to the police, but is worried that they wouldn't believe her⁴, or try to harass or deport her uncle⁵, even though he has a green card.

On the surface of Alejandra's "iceberg," many people don't see much. It **looks like** she has access to a school health center, youth services, and police. But **under the surface**, we can see that those systems have forms of racism and sexism that **affect Alejandra's chances of getting help**. Let's look at these a little closer:

1 Sexism is a system that gives men **power at the expense of others**. Sexism could be described as one of the key engines that allows men like Alejandra's uncle to have power to act violently against others.

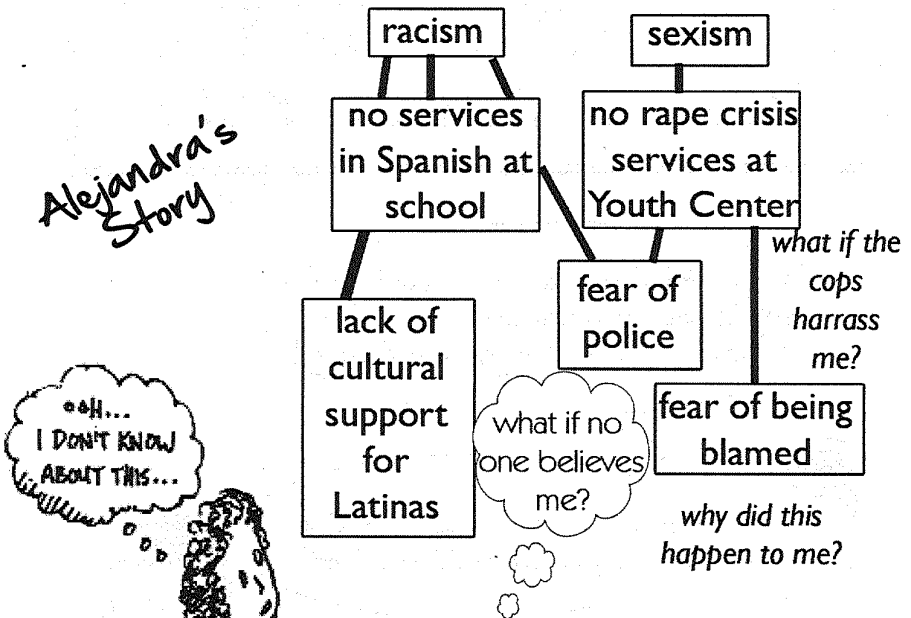
2 Alejandra's school **only having services in English** means that **those who don't speak English might not be able to get services**--even though they're supposed to be for everyone. That is a systemic form of oppression.

3 Alejandra can't get rape crisis services at her health center, which means that **the hundreds of young women who are affected by sexual violence at her school are left out of receiving help**. Sexual violence primarily affects women--this is an example of sexism playing out on Alejandra's campus.

Alejandra's experience with the police labeling all Latinos as "illegal immigrants" and "criminals," is a **symptom of racism** that affects how people of color are targeted as criminals, especially by the criminal legal system. **4**

oppression

Alejandra's Story



WHERE DO YOU SEE THESE
SYSTEMS IN YOUR LIFE?
DO YOU SEE THESE SYSTEMS
AFFECTING THOSE IN YOUR
FAMILY?
YOUR COMMUNITY?
YOUR CITY?

IT IS MY BUSINESS!

BEING A STRONG ALLY

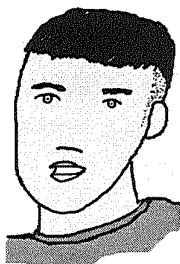
Phew! All of this stuff is huge! We're talking about oppression, rape, bad relationships... I'm a little overwhelmed.



Yeah, and also, like, what am I supposed to do about it?



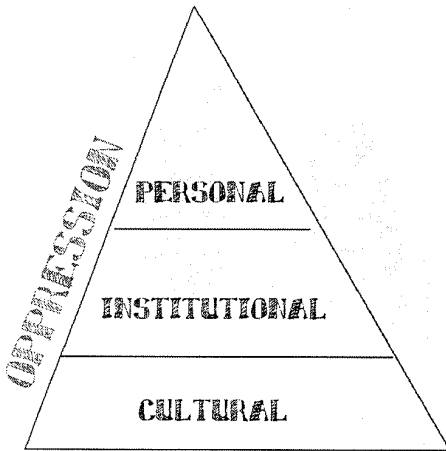
I don't know, and it doesn't matter. It's not even really going to change anyway. Never does, never will.



Hey, it makes sense if you're feeling overwhelmed. This stuff is hard and painful, and it's happening all over the place to lots of people. But how we act and what we do in response to this stuff does make a big difference.



Let's think back to that **iceberg**—the different ways that things can affect us and our lives. The first way we looked at that iceberg, we said that incidents can be happening on three levels—personal, institutional, and cultural.



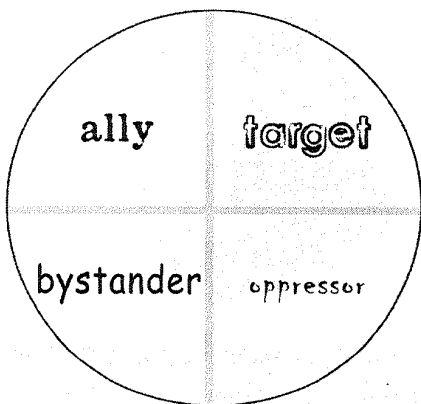
We can also name and change things on those same levels—interrupting and preventing a culture of sexual violence that exists interpersonally, institutionally, and culturally.



What? That's kinda abstract to me... What do you mean?

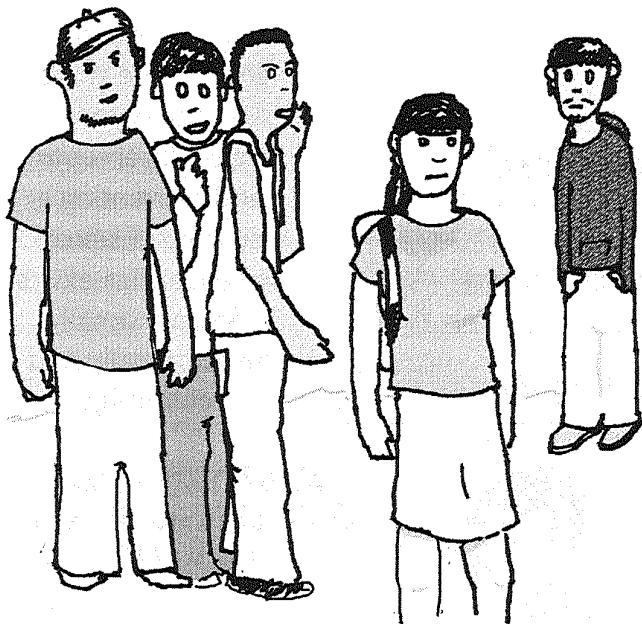
Here's a quick diagram of how oppression often plays out.

There's usually these four roles:



If you're watching the scene, not stepping in or interrupting the situation, you're the **bystander**. As a bystander, we have a choice: we can become an **ally** by stepping up for a target, we may become **targets** ourselves, or we can join the **oppressor** role.

Okay, so let's say you see some guys calling at this girl. They're saying some pretty gross stuff, and she looks really unhappy. You just happen to see this happening... so you're a bystander.



You think about your choices. Do you say something to those guys...tell them it's not cool?



Will they listen to you? Will they start making fun of you, or even beat you up? Would speaking up even make a difference?

OPPRESSOR



You could join in with those guys...maybe you know them and want to look cool. Maybe you don't like that girl, or care either way. That might be funny, or even get you a few new friends...

Yeah, but they could just turn on you....you never know what people are going to be like. Don't want to deal with them hassling you for the rest of your life...better to just stay quiet. Don't say anything...



TARGET

We strongly advocate serving as **allies** for those who are targeted by oppression. We also know that this is really hard – there can be consequences anywhere from losing your friends to losing your job. But, when **we all step up to confront oppression**, we create a community response that helps things change. **We can all take part in changing a culture of violence!**

SPEAKING UP

Sexual violence can **only** exist with the silence of the community. Since we know that sexual violence usually happens between **friends or acquaintances**, we can also understand that often, people **know about abuse** but don't speak about it.



If we are bystanders to sexual violence--that is, we know, or have a strong suspicion that sexual violence has happened-- **we are in a position of choice**. The choice to **speak up**, to talk to a survivor, to confront a perpetrator, or to stay silent **changes lives**.

A **taboo** is something that has been determined to be "unspeakable" by a community or society. **Talking about sexual violence** used to be completely taboo. Things have changed now, but the **shame and silencing still remains**. Talking about sexual violence is a powerful step in changing our community, and ending a culture of sexual assault.

The truth is, if we ignore oppression or harassment around us, **it will continue**. Even more so, it could get more intense.

If we **speak up**, get **support** from those around us, and work on having the behavior stop, **it can change**. **We're all responsible for creating a community where it isn't okay to oppress others**.

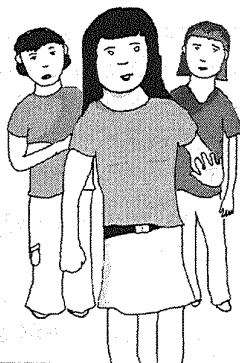
Some Suggestions for Being an Ally Against Sexual Violence

An **ally** is someone who **steps in** and shows support for folks experiencing oppression. An ally **isn't acting from pity** or charity, they are **listening** to those affected and **respectfully taking action** that is requested of them.

Here are ways **you** can be a powerful ally to those around you:

1. **If you notice a culture of sexual violence, interrupt it.** Maybe sexually suggestive comments are commonplace in your school or work, or women are degraded or harassed. If you see it, name it and challenge it!
2. **Interrupt unsafe situations.** If a group or individual is asking for help, or is being targetted, **figure out how you can support them. Practice speaking up and stepping in** for things big and small, even if they don't target you personally. How would you want someone to support you if you were being targetted?
3. **Speak to your friends and family.** It can be easy to have an opinion, but it can be hard to work with others about changing ideas. If your friends do things that aren't so great, **see if you can talk** to them about why you don't do that.
4. **Commit to growing and changing yourself.** Change is hard! When you begin to speak up and challenge systems, you have started on a long path. Staying connected, listening, and learning is the best way to continue this awesome work!

Most importantly,
remember that
**we all have a
responsibility**
to stop sexual
violence, and we
have the power
to do it.



To learn more about any
of the topics we covered
in this zine, find places
to **volunteer**, **look up**
a number for support,
or just to see how many
awesome organizations
are fighting for change
in the Bay, check out the
resources in the back.

*And don't forget...Take care of yourself,
and those you love. Stay safe!*

a short list of

San Francisco Women Against Rape:

Business: 415-861-2024

Crisis Line: 415-647-RAPE (7273)

www.sfwar.org

California Youth Crisis Line:

800-843-5200

Children of the Night Line:

National crisis intervention line for youth ages 11-17 who are coerced into prostitution or pornography.

800-551-1300

Cole Street Clinic

415-386-9398

Free medical clinic for youth. Primary medical care (including pregnancy testing) as well as counseling and case management.

Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth

Advocates for youth with programs and community involvement.

415-239-0161

Mission Girls

(415) 648-2826

Services and support for young women and girls, Mission based.

Center for Young Women's Development

(415) 977-1980, www.cywd.org

Support and services for young women in San Francisco.

bay area resources

Comprehensive Child Crisis Services

24 hr. crisis intervention for children and their families.

415-970-3800

Diamond St. Youth Shelter

Night shelter for homeless and runaway youth.

Crisis Line: 800-669-6196

Dimensions Clinic

LGBTQ health clinic for youth

415-487-7589

Guerrero House

Transitional living program for homeless youth.

415-550-4476

Larkin St. Youth Center

Drop-in health and services center for youth.

415-673-0911

Lavender Youth and Recreation Center

Center for services and support for LGBTQ youth.

415-703-6150 www.lyric.org

Youthline

Youth-run phone services, support, and referrals for Bay Area youth.

888-977-3399 open from 12pm-10pm

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

This zine could not have been created without the incredible support, feedback, education, and love of our community. Thank you to everyone who looked at drafts, pointed out errors, helped with phrasing and language, made layout suggestions, and gave their opinions. Specifically, but not only, thank you to: the youth of ACLU Friedman Youth Project, Balboa High School students, Rev. Jason Lydon, Nayla Raad, and the outstanding staff at San Francisco Women Against Rape. This work would never be possible if not for the decades of effort, struggle, love, and bravery of thousands of people working to end violence every day. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Isaak Brown has been a Community Educator with San Francisco Women Against Rape since 2008. He is passionately committed to ending violence, and has deep admiration and faith in the awesome spirit of young people. He owes his training and education to the incredible Bay Area youth programs that raised him, and is deeply grateful for the radical and life-changing work of youth-run anti-violence programs everywhere.