

Males & Violence: Engaging Men and Boys as Survivors, Advocates and Change Agents Conference.

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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The Intersection of and Faithful Response to Sexual & Domestic Violence In the Black Church

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WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

In this current era of #MeToo, women especially, as well as an increasing number of men, are becoming more emboldened to speak out around issues of sexual & domestic violence, thus rejecting the silencing, shaming and blaming of which has occurred within society as well as the Black church/community. The goals of this workshop are to present various faith based roadblocks as well as resources to the end that the Black Church will empower vs disempower men and women toward healing and encourage survivors to become advocates and change agents in both, the church and society. This session focuses primarily on the Black Church/Community and does not assume that the Black Church is a monolithic community or the only faith based church organization to be impacted by the issues of sexual and domestic violence.

Objectives are to:

- Offer and overview of the **#MeToo** movement and its impact.
- Describe the impact of **Sexual Violence** on both men and women as abusers and survivors and provide an **Ethical/Theological Framework** and **Moral imperative** to the Black Church.
- Review Barriers that hinder **healing, accountability and empowerment of survivors**.
- Offer ways the Black church can move from being a barrier to becoming a resource.
- Examine how survivors can move from Victor to Victim toward becoming **Agents of Change**.

The Woman Who Created, Before the Hash-Tag # - "MeToo"

Tarana Burke
2006
Black Women
Sexually Assaulted

"You Are Not Alone"
Healing etc.



What is the MeToo Era?

Reignited by Alyssa Milano

"If you've been sexually harassed or assaulted write '#metoo'"



What is the MeToo Era?

- Monday Night there were 53,000 #MeToo
- nearly a million times in 24 hrs.
- 48 Million around the world
- FB -45% of users have had Friends who reported #MeToo



WOMEN ARE EMBOLDENED TO SPEAK OUT

- Sharing Stories of:
- RAPE
 - SEXUAL ASSAULT
 - HARRASSMENT

Across Social Media/Global
Telling Stories, Leadership
Development, Justice Making

Implications for the Black Church



WOMEN ARE EMBOLDENED TO SPEAK OUT

#MeToo
Not Anti-Male Movement
It is not a woman's movement
It is a survivors movement



An Ethical, Moral and Theological Framework

Sexual Violence Is a Sin/Ethical Response

Sexual Violence a sin against a person. Sexual violence violates the **bodily integrity** of another, thus denying a person the **choice** to determine one's own boundaries and activities. Sexual Violence violates another's personhood and objectifies the other, making her or him a nonperson, rendering a person powerless, that is, by taking away that person's resources and sense of self. Sexual violence creates a victim, someone who experiences the environment as unsafe and is on alert because of never feeling safe within one's own body. It is also a violation of relationship.

An Ethical, Moral and Theological Framework

Sexual Violence Is a Sin/Ethical Response

Sexual Violence is an act of violence, hatred, and aggression.

Injuries may be physical or psychological

Short of death it is the ultimate feeling of powerlessness

An Ethical, Moral, and Theological Framework

Sexual Violence Is a Sin/Theologically

"Theologically speaking "sin" is a state of alienation, brokenness, and estrangement. It is an added dimension of human experience that describes one's estrangement from self, others, and God, which stretches beyond harm as a moral criterion. The estrangement is contrary to the created order and contradicts God's intention for our lives."

Marie Fortune

An Ethical, Moral and Theological Framework

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Sexual Violence Is a Sin/Theologically

"Persons are created in God's image and created to be in relationship. Sin is the rupture of relationship and may be experienced psychologically, physically, socially, and spiritually.

Marie Fortune

The Moral Imperative Through Statistics

Sexual Assault in Prison

The rate of inmate-on-inmate sexual victimization was 3 times higher for females (13.7%) than males (4.2%). 5.3% of prisoners were sexually victimized by prison facility staff.

Prostitution/Trafficking

500,000 to 1.2 million children are involved in child prostitution. There are at least 300,000 male prostitutes under age 16.

Between 300,000 and 400,000 American children and youth are victimized by sexual exploitation each year.

In one study, 1/3 of the women entered prostitution before the age of 15, and 62% of the sample were in prostitution before their 18th birthdays.

Most children enter prostitution at the age of 14.

Prostitution/Trafficking

60% of child prostitutes are first recruited by peers.

96% of prostitutes who entered prostitution as juveniles were runaways. Most stated they had no other option for making money.

Male prostitutes are much less likely to be arrested for prostitution than females.

40% of street prostitutes are women of color; 55% of those arrested are women of color; 85% of prostitutes sentenced to jail time are women of color.

The Moral Imperative Through Statistics

Sexual Assault in the military

- 76% of female victims and 57% of male victims were sexually assaulted at least twice. 7% of perpetrators in reports filed by military members were convicted of a sex offense. Reporting Sexual Harassment
- 1 in 7 victims were assaulted by someone in chain of command, 1 in 4 women and 1 in 14 men suffered persistent sexual harassment in the military.
- 60% of the harassment was from a person in chain of command; 41% said supervisor took no action after.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

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SEXUAL ASSAULT

- 45% Percent of lesbians and 61 percent of bisexual women experience rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner, compared to 35 percent of heterosexual women
- 26 percent of gay men and 37 percent of bisexual men experience rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner, compared to 29 percent of heterosexual men
- 46 percent of bisexual women have been raped, compared to 17 percent of heterosexual women and 13 percent of lesbians
- 22 percent of bisexual women have been raped by an intimate partner, compared to 9 percent of heterosexual women
- 40 percent of gay men and 47 percent of bisexual men have experienced sexual violence other than rape, compared to 21 percent of heterosexual men
- Within the LGBTQ community, transgender people and bisexual women face the most alarming rates of sexual violence. Among both of these populations, sexual violence begins early, often during childhood.

Sexual & Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

Rape
Sexual assault
Clergy Sexual Misconduct
Rape/Sexual Assault in LGBT Relationships
Acquaintance Rape
Sexual Assault in the Military
Prostitution/Sex Trafficking
Incest
Sexual Harassment
Sexual Assault on College Campuses
Pornography
Cyberstalking/Sexting
Sexual Assault in Prison

Barriers That Hinder Healing, Accountability, and Empowerment of Survivors

- Church Culture
- The use of male only language
- Rape Culture
- Not Believing Victim
- Biblical & Theological Misrepresentation
- Shaming, and Blaming
- Church Secretes
- Lack of Systems of Accountability
- Intersectionality of Race, Class, Gender, and Criminal Justice System

Barriers: The Notion of “Gender Entrapment”

A socially constructed process through which African American women, particularly, have been seduced and co-opted to adopt sets of gender and racial identities, principles, and concepts that have made them vulnerable to male emotional and physical violence.

Toward a Faithful Response to Sexual Violence

- Believe the Victim “shaming, blaming, policing women’s bodies, eye-candy”
- Support the Victim *Leaving victims to their own devices!*
- Hold Violators Accountability *“excusing bad behavior” “boys will be boys”*
- Education Yourself & Your Community *ignorance is no excuse*
- Provide Theological Clarity *“stop cheering at your own crucifixion”*
- Do No Harm *the Bible is rich and fertile territory...*
- Engage in Advocacy *-lack of networking*
- Do Works of Social Justice *#praywithyourbody*
- New Sexual Ethic *“disempowerment to empowerment”*

Toward a Faithful Response to Sexual Violence

- Create a safe
- Remember Justice Making is God’s Word
- Work Toward Changing the Culture
- Inclusive Language, Women in Leadership, Boundary Training, Educate Yourself *ignorance is no excuse*
- Be and Interrupter
- Understand issues of Gay/Lesbian, Transgender
- Story Listening with Empathy (examples)

Martha Armstrong, 69, in Wilmington, North Carolina, "I was raped by a stranger when I was 20 years of age when I worked and went to college in Atlanta," she said. "That was almost 49 years ago and, at that time, the advice du jour was 'Don't tell anyone!' But I did. I reported it to the police. In addition to raping me, he also stole my driver's license, student ID and the cash I had in my wallet. This happened on a Friday. On Monday, he called me twice at work and I freaked out and broke down. I took a week off work and a month later my boss fired me because I was 'too nervous and jumpy' at work. Plus, I wouldn't sleep with him."

Young Boys Story
 "I was nine years old when the child sexual abuse started,"

REMEMBER YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

This Is My Difference Maker Story

FROM VICTIM TO VICTOR

Growing up in Washington, D.C., she recalled near daily street harassment, from men yelling vile things at out of car windows to boys chasing her as she rode her bike. A longtime women's activist, the 60-year-old Taylor founded a training organization 20 years ago called Defend Yourself, helping women learn "empowerment defense" to ward off physical and emotional attacks in all aspects of their lives

REMEMBER YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

African American Domestic Peace Program (AADPP)

A Collaboration of Experts Men and Women Trainers
 EXPERTISE:

Sexual Violence, Domestic Violence, Culturally Specific Batters Groups, Mental Health, Grant Writers, etc.

Parting Thoughts

Time Up's is a secular Action Oriented Movement

THERE MUST BE A #TIMESUP MOVEMENT WITHIN THE FAITH COMMUNITY

This is our Call!

The Faith Community, Our Call

We are called to make justice,
called to make it right. Called to
do the Holy work of turning back
the night. Called to look into each
shattered shaken soul. Call to
make this world, our world, whole.

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

BE A DIFFERENCE MAKER!

Go! Be A Difference Maker in Your Faith Community &
In the World

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Richie, Beth E., *Compelled to Crime: the gender Entrapment of battered black women* (Routledge Press: NY), 1996

www.AADPP.COM

"Letter From A Black Woman in Prison"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwrtFQdM1Dg>

16 Days of Activism, 2016 – Sharon Ellis Davis