

**From Micro-inequities to Murder:  
Confronting Hurtful Workplace Behaviors**

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- I. What? Here? Violence in the *Ivory Tower*.
- II. Violence vs Nonviolence
  - Violence:
    - Meanness*
    - Person's rights are violated
    - Hits wounds (personal, professional)
  - Nonviolence:
    - Way of *being*
    - Raise personal attention to covert or overt aggression
    - Use self-examination (attention to self and others)
    - Use self-care (tend to self)
- III. My Story
  - Blind-sighted, personal, vicious attack
  - Fit definitions of violence
  - Use of nonviolence approach (wordless music to lyrics)
- IV. Self-care Healing – *Don't Diminish What You Know*.
  - Listen to own body
  - Don't try to make sense of the experience, just allow it
  - Find safe places to process the experience
  - Determine with *trusted others* what/when/how to take action considering:
    - \* personal strengths/weaknesses
    - \* status and role in the system (victim/perpetrator)
    - \* life circumstances
  - Give self time to heal
  - Learn from the experience

***"Nonviolence has to be more than a philosophy; it has to be a way of life."***

Congressman John Lewis

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**W**hen you are one of three or four Latinos and a woman, you are expected to do a lot of things not expected of other faculty. (Turner, 2002)

**M**istreatment occurs at all levels in institutions of higher education. (Spratlen, 1995)

**R**esearch links workplace harassment and abuse with distress and drinking. (Richman, Rospenda, Flaherty, Freels, & Zlatoper, 2004)

**G**o back to Arab land where Jew hating is condoned. Get the hell out of America. You are a disgrace and a pathetic typical Arab liar – email from one faculty member to another. (Kleinfield, 2005)

*THE ONLY  
REFUGE  
LEFT TO US  
WAS THE  
POET'S  
IVORY  
TOWER,  
WHICH WE  
CLIMBED,  
EVER  
HIGHER, TO  
ISOLATE  
OURSELVES  
FROM THE  
MOB.*

**N**obel laureate and professor accused of bullying scientist into declining assistant professorship. (Wang, 2006)

**I**nterpersonally abusive workplace dynamics constitute a significant public health problem. (Richman, Rospenda, Nawyn, & Flaherty, 1999)

**B**ullying is a common, and in many cases accepted, part of work. (Meyers, 2006a)

**T**wo of the three professors murdered Monday had expressed concern about the student's "anger." (Buchik, 2002)

**P**rofessor charged with raping woman in campus office. (Gordon, 2003)

**A**frican-American faculty at predominantly White universities were subjected to systemic and structural academic violence during tenure review. (Lee & Leonard, 2001)

*Gérard De  
Nerval,  
(1808–1855)*

First known use of *ivory tower* to refer to the academic world. (Bartleby.com)

**S**exual harassment and generalized workplace harassment are related to increased odds of illness, injury, or assault. (Rospenda, 2005)

**C**hanging the stressful situation is associated with positive outcomes, while coping behaviors aimed at avoiding the implications of the stressful incident are associated with maladaptive outcomes. (Brough, O'Driscoll, & Kalliath, 2005)

**H**igh blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, migraines, fatigue, muscle pain and ulcers are just some of the health effects that WHO has linked to bullying. (Meyers, 2006b)

**A**fter controlling for race, type of institution, teaching field, level of instruction, tenure status, rank, highest degree, years since highest degree, age, average proportion of time spent on teaching and on research, number of classes taught, and number of total publications or other permanent creative works, full-time female faculty members earned nearly 9 percent less than their male counterparts. (Bradburn, Sikora, & Zimble, 2002)

## ***SOME DEFINITIONS***

***Academic Violence*** is any combination of personal behaviors and systemic practices resulting from misuse of power and influence which are demeaning to the individual faculty member. (Lee & Leonard, 2001)

***A Chilly Climate*** results from the combined effect of a number of practices – each of which is relatively inconsequential or even trivial when taken alone – which cumulatively communicate lack of confidence, lack of recognition and devaluation, and which result in marginalization. (Prentice, 2000)

***Marginalization*** is the process through which individuals or groups are peripheralized on the basis of their identities, associations, experiences, and environments. (Vasas, 2005)

***Micro-inequities*** are pervasive though often subconscious phenomena which include subtle putdowns, snubs, dismissive gestures and sarcastic tones that can sap motivation. (Lublin, 2004)

***Workplace Bullying*** is broadly defined as psychological, physical, or sexual abuse or hostility within the workplace. Common features include persistence and repetition; offensive, unsafe, unwanted, or intimidating behaviors; and abuse of power or control. (MacIntosh, 2005)

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- \*Recommended introductory reading.

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