

KS Papers

COPY

SPEAK OUT
on
SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF WOMEN AT WORK

May 4, 1975
Ithaca, N.Y.

SPEAK-OUT

May 4, 1975

Ithaca, New York

LIN: You're going to hear this alot today, so I guess I'll be the first one--I'm nervous. My name is Lin Farley and I'd like to welcome you to the first Speak-Out ever, that I know of or anyone else knows of, on the issue of sexual harassment on the job. I almost feel like applauding. This is really seriously the first time any group of women anywhere has gotten together to talk about this issue and I think x we're making history. I started to say, the groups that are sponsoring this Speak-Out are Working Women United, which you'll hear alot more about later on in the program; the Women's section of the Human Affairs Program at Cornell (applause) boo for the latter part of that--and N.O.W., and the President of NOW is here, Joyce Stafford, and she's given alot of support. NOW I think deserves alot of support; they're a fledgling group just trying to get started after a couple of years of being in abeyance here in Ithaca,. I think that when we all clapped I have on my notes here to congratulate you, one for coming out in the rain; two for taking time wa away from your families; three for braving ~~whxx~~ I think what is a controversial issue, for recognizing your own interest and taking time out for yourselves. I think that's really ~~xx~~ important for women to do. A little someting... I think that we need to put this ussue--sexual harassment on the job--into some perspective before we actually start k the Speak-Out and I think that the headlines of the American press has

2222222222

given the headlines, ok the American press has given us a good way to go about that and one is the example of the psychiatrist who wrote an article, he writes a column for Cosmopolitan magazine, his name is Jan Hartogs. He was sued by a woman patient who in the course of therapy he told her that if she really wanted to get well what she had to do was sleep with him and so she did and she didn't get well, ~~wh~~ she got worse. Anyway, I don't know how she finally decided that she wanted to do something about it, but she did and she sued him for \$350,000. Less than three weeks ago she won. The other case has hit the headlines about the same time. It was a judge in Manhattan Family Court who was using his power in that situation to exploit women sexually. I think until I began to think about the issue of sexual haraasment on the job, until Working Women United formed, until Carmita Wood came forward add started talking about what happened to her--until we actually as a group began to look at this, at the patterns of it--I would've probably thought, oh, yeah, there's a real bad fucker up there, a nasty guy both with the psychiatrist and with the guy in Family Court. I think what is really important to say is, before we started really examining this issue and looking at the way it's part and parcel of our job experience we ~~xm~~ could have said that they were isolated individuals--that this is the rule, rather than the exception, that sexual harassment is wide-spread and because it is widespread, it's really serious and it's causing

women harm and damage all overx the place. I apologize if anyone was offended by blanker . I really wanted to clean up my language today. I think before we get started I really, really would like to point out that although you see one woman standing up here, this entire event, what x~~p~~ you're going to hear this afternoon, could not have been accomplished without the thought, the energy, the time, the commitment, the spirit, and the courage of an infinite number of women and you're going to see a lot of them, a lot of them are going to talk later on, etc. And I also want to bring that up because I have a few points that I want to throw out and this x~~i~~ isn't the product of my thinking alone, it's the product of a lot of women sitting down and talking to each other, sort of what we're going to do here, on a larger scale. There was literature that was handed out to you about what a Speak-Out is. Basically, it's an exploration; it's not a debate, there is no aughority, that's another thing to keep in mind, there is no expert on this. The only expert really is our lives, our experiences. And I think that I couldn't stress more strongly that when you're talking about experiences and you're talking about lives, no woman's experience is more profound or more important or more right than another woman's experience, and when we're talking about an issue like this, which analogous to rape or some of the other women's issues, it's really important to keep that

in mind. For instance, we're not here to say that women who fight back against this kind of thing are better, or more right or more correct than women who don't. The analogy to rape I mentioned. For years the idea, the mythology went: Well, no woman can be raped, right? When you spread your legs you're cooperating. Well, nobody stopped ~~fx~~ to figure out that there's a gun at your head or a knife at your throat or somebody was attacking your kids in the background, etc. Well, the same thing applies I think to the sexual harassment of women on the job. Depending on whether or not you've got a husband, depending on how many kids you're supporting, depending upon all those factors that enter into your status in the job market, you will cooperate ~~ex~~ or you won't. If you're a young woman living at home from a fairly affluent background, you might be able to leave the job you're on and go to another one and that might be one way of dealing with an intolerable situation. If you come from a different situation that option might ~~x~~ not be available to you, so you're going to have to try and figure out something else that you ~~x~~ can do to keep your dignity or whatever. There simply aren't, I think ~~x~~ this has to be said, for a lot of women there ~~ex~~ are no options. Cooperating is not an option--I mean, the choice not to is simply not there. I think we have to keep stressing that what we're here to talk about is that ~~xxxxxx~~ a woman always has to respond whether she cooperates or she

doesn't cooperate, or she lets his ego off the hook or leaves the job or whatever kind of thing she works out. The problem is that a woman has to do something, right? That some problem is being presented to her and a second point here that came out among a group of women in a committee was that women may put up with it for awhile, they may have no other choice, because the risks of leaving are too great, but they pay the price. Part of whatprice is all about we're going to hear about in a few minutes. Once again, I think this is just underlining what I said before and that is, this is serious. For instance, one of the ways women deal with it is to become a doll, to become empty-headed, to laugh a lot, and in essence to just disappear, not to be a person anymore--somethingg I identify with. I think I spent a lot of years just being an empty-headed whatever--hiding my anger, hiding my real feelings, hiding who I was just keeping it all back inside, ~~right~~right? Another point that ~~I'm trying to~~ supposed to mention is reputation. In 1975 we are in an enlightened era. MS. Magazine is happt to tell us how liberated and free we all are and yet I want to tell you right now that our posters were ripped down in plants all over this town. I went out and postered myself and I put the poster up, I'd turn around and it was gone. The man said, "Sure, fine, put it up, honey." I turned around and it disappeared. This issue threatens people; it's made alot of people unhappy. As I understand it, Ithaca Gun, Morse

Chain, and NCR, both plants, have been buzzing about this this last week and women are coming down on both sides of the issue. But~~xxxx~~ it's making people talk and it is making people talk because it really affects the way we live our lives and what we're talking about is changing the way we're living our lives. One thing that means is women, some women have put their reputations on the line, some women have stood up and run the risk of having their kids harassed in their job, of having their kids chased off the playground and said, "Wow, your ~~mother's~~ mother's nothing but a whore, your mother's really a bitch, blaa, blaa, blaa." We're not that liberated in 1975 and, believe me, ~~ix~~ when a woman gets up in public and starts talking about that word~~xxxxxxx~~ --sex-- it makes waves and the temptation is to write that woman off, to say, "Wow, she asked for it, blablabla..." I'll just throw something out here that happened in our own office. We've a coed office and sometimes it feels good and sometimes it's painful and sometimes it's just a lot of struggle, and we had a lot of struggle around this issue. (Pause) Maybe I really shouldn't go into that. I'll just go to the next point and that is we don't, underline, don't bring it on--it happens to all of us in one way or another. I'm going to move on real fast here. Something we've been conditioned to is not to hurt people, women have been conditioned to be "nice" with a capital N--over and over and over againx the women

who have called us at the office etc. have said "well, at the time, you know, I didn't want to make a scene, I didn't want to make any trouble; I didn't want to cause any waves, etc., It's ~~just~~ what we have been conditioned to be! We thought about putting on the posters the slogan or the idea of "playing the game: because it connotes a whole lot. I grew up thinking that I didn't know how to play the game, right, and I'm not gonna define it because each one of us has some kind of definition in our heads for what it really means. I think it means ~~fx~~ sort of knowing how to flirt, knowing how to be cool, knowing how to let his ego off the hook nicely, etc., ~~xxx~~ and at ~~xxxx~~ some time or other you know the game gets to be real painful and at some time or other when a woman opts not to play, right, leave me alone, I'm different, I don't want to hear about it, blabla... She just opts out, that's when she'll be accused of being an old battleaxe, what's the matter with you, you're going to turn into an old maid, hey prune face, blablabla--because really the burden is on us to smile all the time, to be nice sex objects, etc, etc, and that is playing the game and that is to a certain extent cooperating etc. I think that's about it and I'm going way over the time that was allotted for this and I just want to say briefly, that what's going to follow now will be a Speak-Out. Karen Sauvigne is going to explain that. After the formal

Speak-Out there will be an open mike in which anyone here in this room can come forward and talk about her personal experience or her personal reaction to what she's heard as long as she stays within the context of her personal experience. After that we have a questionnaire that will be handed out and I'll just say something about this now. If for any reason you have to leave, please pick up a questionnaire from ~~Jodi~~ Jodi at the back of the room and you can mail it back to us and the reason I'm stressing that is--I was in New York City recently testifying about this issue and Elinor Holmes Norton, a black woman who's a real fighter and a real ~~gag~~ go-getter and when she says something she means it said, she would like to see this issue written in to all the affirmative action programs in the ~~xxxx~~ city which would just be a beginning. If Manhattan goes for it, it'll go statewide and ~~wh~~ that's just a beginning for what can be done around this issue, but they need statistics, they need information--it has never been collected before, no hard data exists on this issue, so please, if you have to leave, pick up a questionnaire. If you've picked one up already, they are numbered ~~xx~~ and there'll be a time later in the program to fill it out so don't worry about it, just hold on to it, but once again, if you have to leave, get one from Jody and she'll tell you where to mail it back to us. And I'll sit down now. Karen....

KAREN SAUVIGNE: We're all here together today to speak out on the subject of sexual harassment on the job. A bunch of us have been working real closely with the nine or ten women who are going to tell you their stories today. I'm just going to briefly introduce the concept of a speak-out, some of you may not be familiar with it. Speaking out is a process of exploration of our own feelings. Women will come up here today one by one and tell you in their own words, their own experiences. These women have spent a lot of time in the last few weeks mustering the courage to come forth and do this. It's not an easy thing to do. They'll be admitting things about themselves, about their experiences, about their lives that they've never told anyone before, and it's difficult and it takes a lot of of courage. The process of exploration involves all of us sitting and listening to what these women have to say and not commenting on it and not challenging it but assuming that each woman's experience is valid for herself and that that's how we're going to learn what sexual harassment on the job is really about, by understanding what women who ~~really~~ really experienced it, really felt. People will be sharing very deeply personal stories and ~~and many of them are very painful and very difficult to hear~~

I can't stress enough the importance of respecting that, the process these women have gone through and the need

10 10 101010

to hold our comments until the open mike when we'll have the opportunity ~~to~~, everyone will have the opportunity to tell her own story. Let me briefly say that we're taping what the women at the ~~xx~~ prepared speak-out are saying so we'll have a permanent record of it. We think this is an historic event and we don't want to lose it, however, if anyone comes up to the open mike and doesn't want to be taped, we can very easily turn the tape recorder off. You shouldn't at all, I mean all you have to do is tell Lin who will be sitting here, to turn the tape recorders off and they'll be off when you want to speak. There's also someone who's ~~x~~ going to be taking photographs--again only of the prepared speakers and the back of the audience. We understand that it takes a lot of courage even for a lot of you women who are not speaking out to be here today and we feel that it's very important to respect that. In any case, there's no press here and the only photographs are being taken by us, for our own use, maybe in a book, if we ever write one. What we're talking about is ~~anxiety~~ issue that affects an awful lot of women--it probably ~~x~~ has affected, I don't know, at least 50% of you here today, maybe more--and we're talking about it because it's a pattern that goes on in women's lives, and these women will be describing the

11 11 11 11 11

patterns that they've lived through. I just want to stress again that these women are going to be coming up one by one, telling you--things that its ~~going to be~~ very difficult for them to say and we just need to be very respectful of that and of the courage it takes these women and accept the validity of everything they have to say. I guess that's enough. The Speak-Out will just proceed, one woman after another.

~~XX~~

CONNIE KORBEL: Do you want us to identify ourselves? Well, I'm Connie Korbel and I work for the personnel department at Cornell and I wouldn't be here today except for two people. I'm here to support Carm, she's a very dear friend, and I'm here today because my husband feels it's important and he's given me a lot of backing. (applause) I've had many, many jobs over the last ten or fifteen years and I've been shot down because I've been married ~~three~~ three times but I can't remember now as I think back, ever having had a job without sexual harassment. The only thing is that since Jenny [Lin] got up here and talked I'm suddenly aware of that, I didn't realize it, and I wasn't taught the game--I guess I just sort of fell into it, seemed to come very natural. I guess I used it on jobs before to get what I wanted, I sort of think. But we're

12 12 12 12

all young and foolish for awhile, it just took me a little longer, I guess, to grow up. I suddenly became aware of things when my family sort of started to grow up too and suddenly I had a little girl who wasn't a little girl any more, she was thirteen going on fourteen and I didn't want her to grow up that way. I wanted her to grow up differently, so I decided if I was going to do that I had to set a better example I guess. And I was divorced at the time of the story I'm going to tell you about and I was dating at the time the man who is now my husband but I was divorced, and I had a job but I also had children to support and I didn't get my support checks very well, I had to go to court every few months. And I probably could have survived without this second job, but it meant the children had to go without some of the extras-- not as much money for pretty clothes and so on and so forth, so I felt it was very important. One little incident: there's a lot of things that have happened on my jobs that I've never told anybody and I don't suppose I ever will, they don't seem that important, each single individual piece, but when you start thinking about them over your lifetime of work, it suddenly becomes something that you sort of cringe at. I don't know, it's... why, why did this have to happen to me--maybe I should've stayed home and had babies, like my mother said, I don't know. I don't think I'd have been happy that way either. One thing did happen a few years ago that's very--at the time I almost thought it

13 13 13 13

was funny. I did have a job at one point where I had no trouble with the bosses but I was doing some bookkeeping kind of work for one of the local stores and I've always fashioned myself with kind of short ~~kxx~~ skirts--I'm sorry, I like them, I'm comfortable in them and I was called into the office one day after having been there over a year on my job and my work was very acceptable I have been ~~fi~~ given promotions and I had never been harassed by my boss, and suddenly I was called in and says I was going to have to ~~x~~ wear longer skirts or pants to work and I asked him ~~xxxxxxx~~ why, and it seems that some ~~of~~ old biddy had come in with her husband ~~x~~ and he had been eyeballing me over the counter or some such thing and she had made a major complaint ~~x~~ to the manager and I was told to either wear something different or stay home. I asked him if ~~x~~ he would offer to buy me a new wardrobe and he said no~~x~~ and I~~x~~ said I'm sorry then I'll have to work in what I have. And I worked that way a few ~~few~~ more months and I ~~ifx~~ left. I couldn't hack it any more. But the story I have to ~~xxxxx~~ tell today is a job I had waiting tables just a few years back. About three years I guess. I had returned from Florida. I had a job as I was saying and I was in shopping at Century one day for Christmas presents--it was the first part of December. And I saw a man in there who was very ~~xxxx~~ pleasant, I had known him for some ten years and I might add here I had waited on him in another restaurant day in and day out. He'd always been a gentleman, very friendly. I liked his wife and family and so on and so forth and he also was the owner of a restaurant. And

the day I saw him he says, "Hey, where've you been. I haven't seen you around in a long time." I told him briefly I just returned. Hex says, "Well, are you working?" I said "yes". He says "You're not waiting table anymore, huh?" And I go, "No, I haven't been, but I've been considering it." "If you want a job," he goes, "you come in any time, anytime." I said, "You sure?" He says, "Come in and see my wife next week. She'll give you a job. We'll set up your hours, whatever you want. Lover to have you!" I thought it was great. And I might add here too that my husband today was with me that day because wex were shopping for some children's gifts at the time. So I went in the next week and I saw his wife, whom I've also known for many years, and she was just tickled to death to have me, set up my hours for Fridayx and xSaturday evenings and I was also going to school part-time during the week, so it was quite a rough schedule to keep. My daughter, my older daughter, had to stay home those evenings and babysit. So, we started working. OK: My first night was fine, it was beautiful. Until the end of the evening. I'm cleaning up the tables, most everybody's kind of left, seems like he always managed to find extra things for me to clean up late at night. And he made a pass at me. Well, I'm used to that game, I just shrugged my shoulders and said that's not what I'm ~~am~~ here for, I'm sorry, and so x on and so forth, like we always do, and went home that night. I worked the next night, no problem at all. It was like it ~~had~~ never ^{had} happened; it was like a relief to me. The next week came up and the same ~~Fridayxnight~~ thing Friday

15 15 15 15 15

night, passed it off, Saturday night, quiet. So I figure, well, you know, he was giving me the bit, can't blame a guy for trying, yuk, yuk. So I thought to myself, I guess you can't, you know? I've been living with it all my life. Somewhere between the second or third week and two months it got so Friday nights would come along and the evening would draw near and I'd refuse him again and become a little more antagonistic or hint that it might be worth my while. Now ~~xxx~~ exactly what that meant I don't know, he didn't tell me. I think he meant that I had a job if I played along. And it got more and more difficult to pass him off. So the bartenders there were a couple of really nice guys and they had seen him play these silly games before. It was wintertime, I was very fortunate. The guys would go out and go start their cars up, come in and say I can't get the car started, you know, and make a phone call or something and give me an out, a way out of there. And just to break the routine they'd occasionally go out and ~~x~~ start my car and my car wouldn't start or they'd start it ~~x~~ and warm it up and come back for me. That's how it managed to go on ~~x~~ for as many months as it did. I guess I was there almost six months, on these weekends. Then it got so that when you went in on Friday nights your pay for the previous week wasn't in the register with everybody else's ~~xx~~ and the bartenders wouldn't know why--guess so and so's got it. ~~OK~~ OK, I'll get it later. The end of the evening would draw near, he'd find some excuse for me to ~~xxx~~stay. Usually I had to ~~xxx~~ stay if I wanted to get paid. And believe me, tips there weren't enough to live off from so you needed your paycheck.

16 16 16

I didn't care for that silly game at all and that's when I started aching to go in there every week--I'd get sick to my stomach, I'd get headaches and customers noticed a difference in me. My boyfriend at that time started coming in more often at the end of the evening sort of hang around and make sure things were okay for me so I could go home. My boss didn't care for that idea--he suddenly became very rude to him and all my friends. He'd encourage me to sit and have a drink, a coffee or a coke with his friends to encourage them to stay and spend their money, but if one of my friends came in, get him out of here, he's bugging you, you're not working enough, get off your lazy ass. It was always something,. Well, it was towards the very end, I think it was one of the very last Nights I worked, he said he ~~always~~ ~~always~~ ~~always~~ wanted to talk to me about something

. By that time he'd become very more aggressive, much more aggressive, a lot less subtle, and he was retaliating by ~~making~~ ~~making~~ ~~making~~ makingsnide remarks about me in front of other ~~my~~ people.

People took that in their stride, they were used to it, he'd done this many times with a women before and on one occasion he help my check and said he wanted to have a few words with me after work. It doesn't make it very easy to ~~work~~ work all that time and be pleasant and the time came and everyone was gone and I was there and he called me in to his office and ~~sudden~~ suddenly he was all smiles, very friendly,.

What the ~~hell~~ ~~hell~~ ~~hell~~ hell was I supposed to ~~think~~ think? He said, sit down. So start for the chair and he says no, that's

17 17 17

alright, you can just be comfortable, sit on the sofa. And I swear to god, I've neverx seen anybody move so fast in my life. He had me down on that that that lounge kind of sofa he had, a love sear, I guess is what he called it, so fast. I took a swing at him and I probably used more four-letter wored than he ever heard in his life and I was out of there, knowing I had to go back the next week. Well, the next week he was ~~showering~~ downright nasty and I got through about half of the Friday evening and when my boyfriend came in after eleven (he used to go to the nine-o'clock show and then come in at eleven and wait for me) he came in and I was kinda uptight and I went down and had a couple of words with him at the end of the bar--come in to play pool and before I knew it this guy was down at me and everybody at the bar heard him: "Get your ass out to the kitchen. I want a workd with you." So he goes storming off and he gets out there, and he was the kind that could mutter down real low so nobody could hear him but you but man when I talk you can hear me. (applause) Well, the kitchen had this gread big wide ~~door~~ double door thing and it wasn't more than thirty feet from the bar, and for the first time in my life I felt great because I x told a man exactly what I thought about him and his job and anything that even concerned him and the thing that hw was uptight about was the fact that his customers could hear me. I mean, you know... well, I grabbed my coat after I said some very xx nasty things that I heard repeated many months after that by other people. And I got my borfriend and I said "Let's get the heall out of here." And along with me went I would say,

18 181818

a good half a dozen men customers who swore they would never go in there again and that made me feel good, and I didn't go back. And I might add that a ~~xxx~~ coupld of weeks later I went back to pick up that paycheck that I had coming and I didn't want to go back for and I got it from his wife, adn she was just as friendly and nice as ever and that ~~aw~~ woman knew, she knew what I had been through and many many women before me, and mnay more woul probalby go through too. When I see her on the street, there's a woman I know who respects me. I'll be damned, I'll bet her husband does, too. Now the only thing I have left to say is that I'm not a women's libber. I've nothing against wearing shor skirts and I'm not one of the braless crew, I wasn't brought up that way~~x~~ ; I'm sorry, but my daughter goes braless and I don't care. But when I have to stop and think about the fact that my ~~f~~ girls are going to be working one of these days ~~ad~~ and I don't want them to have to play that silly gane. And I don't like to have to come home from work at night knowing that I've had to work like that all day long and come home to a husband who I know if he knew would kill somebody,. And I do think it's time that we all got together adn did something about it. Thank you. (applause)

~~KATEHAPRS: Heather, I can't type this.~~

KATE HARPS

. . . as a secretary in different offices and about three years ago I started dating my male boss, which was a mistake, as I found out later. After a few months I decided I didn't want to see him anymore outside of the office and I told him and he wasn't very happy about that and I suddenly found that, although my work had been quite acceptable up to that point and I had received the usual promotions and raises suddenly everything I did was wrong, you know, my typing was bad and I didn't wear the right things to work and I was thirty seconds late and things like that. And I found if I'd go to lunch with him once in a while that things went much more smoothly and I could avoid a lot of hassle that way, so for a while I did that and then I decided, that's just a complete waste of time and it's really dishonest and I have better things to do with my lunch hour. So I stopped even that and of course the harrassment got worse. And of course he never would go to the personnel office and say she's a bad secretary or anything like that - he had no grounds, but he would call me into his office and berate me for wearing the wrong color of bluejeans or whatever his problem was that day. And finally I went to his bo/ss/ - well one day I found a note in my typewriter when I came in to work in the morning saying that a friend of mine who would come to the office sometimes to meet me for lunch and to sometimes give me a ride home, things like that, was not allowed in the office anymore, - he wasn't to come anywhere near the office although it was a public office and that was really the last straw. I went to my boss' boss and said, "Look, I can't work in this office anymore and as soon as I can get a transfer I'm leaving." My boss' boss said, "Gee, this is the first I've heard of it," which was really

silly because he knew what was going on all the time, he'd just rather ignore it. Not getting any satisfaction from him, I went to the ombudsman who said we should all behave professionally and everything would work out just fine. And that didn't work out very well either, because I wasn't doing anything but my job, as best as I could under the circumstances. Well, my friend, who worked for the vice president, had a discussion with Mr. Willers who you might know is the director of personnel at Cornell. Mr. Willers asked, Well, is he putting his hands on her, is he touching her? And of course that wasn't the problem but that was the only kind of sexual harassment that Mr. Willers was interested in, he didn't care about the abuse of power that was going on, all he cared about was if somebody's ass was being grabbed. Not that he would've done anything anyway I don't think, but that's another problem. I was very lucky, I did get a transfer in about two months to another job in a related office and I was still harassed by this person in my new job and told that I would get - that he would see that I would get fired and that I should have been fired from my previous job. Then, finally, I went to the dean who was director of both his office and my office, and the dean finally after much discussion wrote a very even-handed letter saying that if everybody would just act professional and stay away from each other everything would be fine. So that's what we've done. I'm still there and this man is still in his job and we just don't ever talk to each other, but it wasn't really a very fair resolution because I had to leave my job. I was very lucky to get a transfer and as it turned out it was a better job and I'm certainly much happier, but I know that that doesn't happen all the time. There aren't very many jobs, especially now. This was a few years ago so I

was lucky. But it - somehow it always works out that the woman has to leave. This man is still in his job and nobody - nobody ever suggested that maybe he should leave the office if he could find another job, you know, maybe that would be a good idea. And that's just the way ----- it always works and I'd also like to say that when Lin Farley called me up and asked me if I'd be interested in an organization of women to talk about this problem, my first responses were, no, it's sort of an invasion of privacy - but she's a friend of mine and she's a woman and, you know, she's pretty cool. I still didn't want to talk about it and I didn't even want to think about it and I've found that since then, every time I talk about, every time I think about it, I come up with new - new information from way deep inside that I'd forgotten. My feelings and facts and incidents that I'd buried so deeply within me - because I really felt that it was my problem, that it was my inability to cope with this person who was somewhat irrational. But, you know, I had set it up for myself, because I went out with him in the first place and I just felt that there was something wrong with me and the way I was dealing with it. And It's really good to come and hear other women talking about it. I'm beginning to really feel inside that it's not me; it's - it's them, and it's the way it's set up. It's really good to find that out. /applause/

CAROL

Hi. I'm Carol and the issue that I really want to talk about is something that's caused me a lot of problems - even in remembering and corresponding with recalling that has led to increased, I guess, self-castigation, anger - real idiocy, I guess, in having remained silent for so long. It started when I was a kid. I used to be a pro-

professional model and when I was about sixteen I got a summer job in a showroom and I had lied and I had said that I was nineteen and that I had had all this other experience with other manufacturers on Broadway and I just bullshitted my way through. And the guy took me and I was thrilled because I thought I was tough shit. I thought I was really pulling something over - on the whole industry. /laughter/

The summer was going really well and I was making really good money, and it was a big ego trip. And then I had about two or three weeks before I was going to go back to high school. /laughter/ I was a sophomore or a junior, and we had just gotten the new Fall line in. It was a dress /indiscernible/ and my boss, who was this really big man, he was about 6'4", weighed about 260, had huge feet - he was just really big. /laughter/ I was showing the line to him, he had said that he wanted to see all the dresses, he wanted to see them modeled - would I take these into my dressing room which was a small room adjunct to his office. So I took them in and I came out wearing a couple of the dresses and then I went back in and I was in the middle of changing and I was standing there and I had on my bra and my underwear I guess and he came into my room and he charged at me. He pinned me against the wall and started ripping my clothes off, and he started slobbering all over me. He really had me in a perilous position, there was nothing I could do. I was absolutely petrified. So I tried to fight him, kicking him, and he was really hurting me and he just kept going for maybe a minute, two minutes - it seemed like hours. When you're in that situation you just can't comprehend the actual time. Finally he stopped - after I was practically naked, and bruised and sopping wet from his saliva. And he stepped back, like a couple of feet and he looked at me up and down and I looked really destroyed and he said, "You know,

Carol, if I really wanted to do something to you, there's really nothing you could've done to stop me." And he turned around and walked out.

And I just, I just sort of sat there./indiscernible phrase/ I couldn't believe it. It had happened so fast and what he said was so true and just the fact that he knew that it was true and he really could have raped me if he had wanted to, made me absolutely sick. So after this happened, I really didn't know how to respond. I decided that I was just going to ignore it. I figured that nothing worse than this was going to happen now. I didn't think that he thought that he was going to get anything off of me, and I only had two weeks. And I thought that if I quit and if I made some sort of complaint - I thought about going to the Better Business Bureau, I thought about telling my father who's a lawyer or something - and I really felt like noone would believe me. I felt like it was just so bizarre and that it was just impossible for anyone else to conceive of. I thought that maybe it was my fault because I was young and if I were older I would've known how to handle it. I think now that I'm older if it happened to me I couldn't handle it any better, but I felt that almost like it served me right, you know, I had no business taking this kind of job where I would automatically be put in the position where people would be admiring my body or looking at me as a sex object, which is almost impossible to not happen in a modeling situation. I felt really - really. . . I felt really disgusting. I didn't talk about it for about two years and I never mentioned it to anyone. And when I thought about why, I realized that I was really ashamed. Like I felt it was something that I had done that had brought this onto me, and that by actually admitting it to someone else, it was just so humiliating and degrading and so perverted, that

it seemed difficult to imagine that it was completely a one-sided thing. So consequently I didn't say anything and I thought that noone-noone would really believe what had happened, that somehow I must have fostered it. I must have been guilty in some way. And I felt that if I had told anybody about it they would have thought that I was either really cheap or not worthy of respect or I just thought that noone would be able to understand it unless they had actually gone through the situation. So I thought about it; in terms of my interpersonal relationships I thought about it a lot for years, and the more I thought about it the more I hated myself for being silent and for all the women who would've followed me and gone through the same kinds of things and for the powerlessness of the situation. If I had really decided to do something about it I wouldn't have known where to go or who would've supported me. I wouldn't have known anything. I knew that my parents would've blamed me and said that it was my fault and so I didn't say anything.

So I let the issue die and then something related - thank God not as bad - happened to me a couple of months ago. I was working downtown at a pretty big motor inn. I took a job - I was looking for a job waitressing; this was a cocktail lounge-restaurant, and they didn't have any positions, so he offered me a position as hostess-cashier, you know, where you ring up the buttons for the bill and show the people to their table and smile, that sort of thing. So I took it. I really didn't want it because the pay was very low, it was just an hourly wage, no tips, and I had waitressed before and made quite a bit of money so I wasn't too happy. But I had been told that if I stayed with this job I'd get the next waitressing position available and there were about maybe eight other cocktail waitresses and dinner was men, they only had men waiters and so → (next page)

it seemed difficult to imagine that it was completely a one-sided thing. So consequently I didn't say anything and I thought that noone-noone would really believe what had happened, that somehow I must have fostered it. I must have been guilty in some way. And I felt that if I had told anybody about it they would have thought that I was either really cheap or not worthy of respect or I just thought that noone would be able to understand it unless they had actually gone through the situation. So I thought about it; in terms of my interpersonal relationships I thought about it a lot for years, and the more I thought about it the more I hated myself for being silent and for all the women who would've followed me and gone through the same kinds of things and for the powerlessness of the situation. If I had really decided to do something about it I wouldn't have known where to go or who would've supported me. I wouldn't have known anything. I knew that my parents would've blamed me and said that it was my fault and so I didn't say anything.

So I let the issue die and then something related - thank God not as bad - happened to me a couple of months ago. I was working downtown at a pretty big motor inn. I took a job - I was looking for a job waitressing; this was a cocktail lounge-restaurant, and they didn't have any positions, so he offered me a position as hostess-cashier, you know, where you ring up the buttons for the bill and show the people to their tavle and smile, that sort of thing. So I took it. I really didn't want it because the pay was very low, it was just an hourly wage, no tips, and I had waitressed before and made quite a bit of money so I wasn't too happy. But I had been told that if I stayed with this job I'd get the next waitressing position available and there were about maybe eight other cocktail waitresses and dinner was men, they only had men waiters and so → (next page)

I kept the job and one of the managers took a liking to me, which was quite unfortunate I guess, and he used to make all kinds of little cute remarks and then one day I happened to notice he was wearing a wedding band. I had never realized, it had never even occurred to me to look, I really didn't care--but he was constantly saying--oh, typical disgusting kinds of things that were basically inoffensive considering he wasn't touching me, that was a positive thing about the situation. So I just thought ~~about the situation~~ --I just sort of brushed it off and then I noticed that he was wearing a wedding band and I thought maybe if I commented on that kind of, the fact that he's married, that it would put him off, because it was really getting very uncomfortable for me. So I said to him, "Gee, you know I didn't realize you were married, that makes me feel good because now you're not threatening me." And he looked at me and he smiled and he said to me, he went into this whole big rap about how he really wanted to have an affair with me and I explained to him that it wasn't my policy and it wasn't to my benefit to get involved with married men because of so many complications--I really don't have to go into them now. And he went--he counteracted that with a really interesting argument which was that by labelling him as a married man I was denying myself the opportunity to have fully developed interactional relationships. (laughter) He really did, you know, he was perfectly straight and he went on for about an hour on the same topic--about how if I classified him as a married man I was really limiting myself, and limiting my growth and limiting my personal development and it went on and on and on. And so I said to him I really didn't agree. And he said, well, think

about it, and I said alright. And then, then all this time-- I used to have other conversations with him aside from that and he was pretty ok to work with and we had had some fairly influential discussions and he seemed ok, and I kept pushing him and telling him I couldn't standcashing. x What it amounted to was I had to stand, I wasⁿ't allowed to sit, I had to stand at the cash register--so I had to stand and I worked a long shift on Saturday from about 4:30 to 2:30 in the morning and I really didn't have a break--I just stood and its really straining--you can't imagine what it does to your legs. If you were walking or moving you wouldn't feel it as much, but I wasn't allowed to lean on the regiester or the wall. I just ~~xkxxx~~ had to stand== I felt like an asshole--I really couldn't stand it and there was no money. For a whole night of doing that I'd make about twenty, twenty-five dollars. So I kept pushing that I wanted a waitressing job, and that I was experienced and that I could do it. And so I mostly concentrated on this one manager because there were three or four different managers and he was the one I had the most dealings with. So I kept telling him that I was really dissatisfied and that if something didn't come through I was consideromg leaving. So he siad oh, well, this woman is leaving and I'm very dissatisfied, I've been getting complaints about the service, so just hang in and it'll work out. So I kept plugging away at the numbers and really being bored and hating it and then I --one of the waitresses who I had talked to who was in a full-time position had said she was going on vacation and she wasn't coming back. So this was

great for me because I was just about sure that I would get the job. Apparently the management knew she was leaving too, because right about that time they gave me a cocktail manual, on garnishes and mixed drinks and different gin and vodka--different brands and things like that and I studied it and I got tested on it and I passed. And then they let me practice, so I had a couple of nights where ~~on my own~~ I would come in and I would wait on a few tables. Well, it just happened that ~~xxxxx~~ one of the tables that I was waiting on, one afternoon, was this manager, about three other managers and two of the owners. So I definitely wanted to impress them and I figured that they would give me a nice tip so I went over and I put down the napkins and everything and one of the --this ~~same~~ manager said to me, "Do you want to go for a drink with me after work tonight?" And I said "No." And he said "All I want to do is go out for a drink." And I said "I know." And he said "Well, why don't you think about it." And I said, "OK, I'll think about it but I don't think I'm going to change my mind." So a couple of hours later he came back and he said, "Well, what have you decided?" And I said "I still decided that I don't want to go." And he said, "Well, why don't you come into my office." So I followed him into his office and we both sat down. And he said to me, you know, "How come you don't want to go?" And I explained to him that I thought that if I went out with him, first of all I wasn't interested in going ~~to~~ out with him, second of all that if I did go out and have a drink with him, knowing that he was very, that he wanted to have an affair with

me whether he was ~~x~~ sexually attracted to me or whether it was a status thing for him or a typical business practice, I really don't know. And I said that I told him that I felt that if I went out with him I would be teasing him and I would be encouraging him, and ~~x~~ it wasn't fair for me to go out with him ha-ing absolutely platonic intentions knowing that he wanted to sleep with me and I said that we wouldn't have a very good time-- it would be very uncomfortable. And so he went on and said nothing would happen~~x~~ that I didn't want to happen and to illustrate that point he went on and told ~~me~~ me that he had made it with one of the other hostess-cashiers and then he went on to say that oh, well, everyone knows that she's ~~from~~ the (country, farm?) virgin and so therefore we didn't do anything close to that but at least, the reason I'm telling you this is so you can see that I wouldn't push myself on you. And so, just the fact that he had told me about his sexual encounter with another one of the workers it just made me so upset, ~~xx~~ it really made me sick, and I told him that I still wouldn't go out with him. And he said, again, he said that it would be fine. He said "I don't know why you think that I'm so sexually attracted to you that I couldn't control myself." And I said to him, because most of the time I talked to him was always in a sexual context and he was always making these passes at me, and ~~he~~ he said, oh, but I was only joking. So I said, oh well, I didn't know that. And he said, well I guess you've just misunderstood and from now on we'll ~~be~~ ~~in~~ just have to be on a very ~~in~~ business-like relationship. So I said "OK, fine." So the next~~time~~ --I had waitressed a couple

8

I was ~~was~~ working another night and I was back at the cashier and one of the ~~was~~ other managers came over to me and he said to me, "I'm sorry, Carol, we're not going to be able to use you as a cocktail waitress." And I said, "Oh, really? Why?" And he said, "It just can't work, we just can't do it." And I said, "Well how come? This other woman isn't coming back. You definitely have that full-time position which is five nights and I know that ~~that~~ there are other people that are ~~thinking~~ thinking of leaving, I can't understand it." And he said, "Oh, it's just out of the question, we just can't do it. But if you want you can have another night cashing." I said, "I don't want another night ~~working~~ cashing. ~~xxxxxxx~~ The reason I took this job, which you know and everybody else knows, is that I'm waiting for a waitressing job." And he said, "Well, we can't do it." And I said, "Well, ok, then, I'm quitting." This was right before Cornell 's ~~was~~ Easter break and I ~~was~~ went home, to visit with my parents and when I came back there was a message that this manager had called me. This was the mangager that I'd have all these personal dealings with. So I had to go downtown to pick up my check anyway, so I picked it up and I went into to see him and I said, ~~WW~~ "What did you want? Why did you call? And he said, "I just wanted to find out if you were still working." And I said, "No, I'm not working, I've quit and I can't believe that this shit was pulled on ~~me~~ me." And he said "Oh, what are you talking about?" And I said, "Well, after all this, I was led to believe that ~~I~~ I was

going to get this job and now suddenly it's just pulled away from me and I'm just not gonna--I'm not gonna stand for this kind of games." And he said "Well, you know, cocktail waitresses are a dime a dozen. So I said "Good, good for you, because you're going to need other help and I'm definitely not going to do it." So we parted on those kind of simple, basically even terms. And what really bothered me about it--I was lucky because I didn't need the money to support myself, the money was just for my own spending so I wasn't tied to keeping it. But what killed me about it was that I had talked to him, I had known him sort of well, and I had really thought that he had more respect for me and more liking, I guess, than just another woman on the street that he happened to want to ball. And I was really crushed that he didn't seem to care, in that all the interaction that I'd had with him over a couple of months meant nothing to him. And if I wasn't going to sleep with him, I wasn't going to get my promotion--which is what happened, in essence, you know, without it actually being told to me. And just that experience, combined with my former experiences, just--it made me feel so dehumanized.

It made me feel like I wasn't a person--that no one really cared what I was like or was interested in knowing me. You know, once they saw me and said "Oh, maybe I'll try to make her" or something like that. And regardless of all the games that went on to get up to that point, they were all meaningless. Where, like for me, I interpreted them as meaningless.

just going to be another one and he's just going to be on the make. But I always thought that that was just one part of him and the other part there was still some kind of relationship where we'd be talking, whether it'd be business or whatever. But I never thought, I guess in my own - ridiculousness - that it would really make me lose my job. And the fact that I did have to leave and I didn't get the promotion - it just made me so disappointed and so apprehensive I haven't even looked for another job. I just feel like - its at the point where I can't take it any more. I've just had enough. And it took me - it really took me a lot of energy to come up here, and some of these things are feelings that I guess I internalized and felt so much responsible for that its really a relief - its almost like a catharsis to have other women sharing these experiences and not feeling that somehow, there was something unconscious - or maybe mildly conscious - that I was doing to initiate these kind of responses. And I really don't think that its me and I think that so many other women have shared a similar experiences - its really a comfort. ~~(x)x(x)x~~

LOU EDELMAN

My name is Lou. For about two and a half years I worked in the mail room at one of the local corporations which I can't name. My duties included sorting and metering U.S. mail and handling ~~XXXX~~ inter-office mail. When I started the job it was really simple and there wasn't too much work but as time went on it got really busy and my boss came in to help me. The mail room is set ~~xxx~~ up so that there's boxes on the walls and there's a step like this which is very narrow, and in order to reach the mail boxes you had to either slide past someone or step down and then back up again, and my boss decided that it was more convenient to slide past me in order to get the mail in the boxes and he would slide past and put his ~~arm~~ ^{hand} on my behind or put his arm around me. And when he started it I would jokingly say "Please don't do that, it really bothers me, cut it out, watch your hands," and he just kept it up--it didn't make too much difference to him. He thought I was being funny. He'd come into my office, I'd be sitting at my desk, and he would come over and put his arms around me and I'd kind of shrink into my seat and put my arms like this and say, "Leave me alone. Don't do that." And it never -- it just never sank in. And one day we were sorting mail and he slid past me put his arm around me, put his hand on my behind and I drew a line around myself and I said, "Anything inside this circle is mine. Don't touch it! It's mine. Leave me alone!" And that to him was a big joke. Nothing I ever said made any difference and one of my girlfriends who worked there would come in and see him doing the same shit and she would make remarks about how nasty it was and that didn't bother him either. So I decided to look for another job and I got a job interview through personnel and the day of the interview I came to work dressed as I usually did in T-shirt and dungarees went to the bathroom and changed my clothes. And I put on a bra, which I never wore to work. I went back to the office and my boss came in and he looked and he said, "You're wearing a bra!" (snaps bra) "Boiling! Like that, which really pissed me off but there wasn't anything I could do about it. So I went on the interview and when I got there the man showed me around. It had been posted as a kennel worker, assuming you were going to be

working with dogs and all it turned out to be was a janitor cleaning up dog shit, and I just didn't feel that I was cut out for that kind of job, eight hours a day. So he showed me around this place and I noticed there were all women working for him. And I said, "How come there are only women working for you, how come you don't hire men for this job?" And he looked at me in shock and said, "I'd never hire a man for this job - women make the best cleaners." So I said, "Thanks, I really don't want this job," because if I had taken the job he would've been dead in a month. So I came back to work and I was really upset and my boss said to me when I got back, "Mrs. So and so from upstairs has a lot of work for you to do, right now." And this woman had a habit of always bringing down last minute orders that should've been phoned in ahead of time, and I looked at him and I said, "I'm sorry, I'm not going to do it. I'm too busy." And he looked at me and he said, "If you don't do it by the time I come back you're going to be in an awful lot of trouble." Well, when I ~~xxx~~ lost my temper and said, "I'm not going to do it," I had every intention of doing my work and I did do my work immediately after he left the office. I just felt like blowing off steam. I'd seen men that I work with do it to him, much more aggressively, using filthy language, yelling and screaming at him, and all he would do is just sit there and take it. When he came back into the office after I had finished my work he looked at me and said, "you know, what's bothering you? What's the matter? Tell me what it is." But he didn't say it nicely, he said it snidely. Really like he couldn't give a shit one way or the other. And I said, "I'm sorry, but I can't talk about it with you. You're just not the sort of person I can discuss this with." And the next day when I came to work he handed me a letter, that had gone into my file, telling me and anybody who read my file that I was not what he would consider a really good worker, that I was...That I disobeyed his rules and if I was to ever disobey anything he told me after that I would be fired immediately. And I got really angry because I'd worked with the man for 2 and a half years and put up with all his shit and all of a sudden I was no good. So I went to personnel and I said, "Please take the letter out of my file," and they ~~xx~~ said, "We'll were sorry we can't do that. Anything that

goes into your file stays there unless you want to file a grievance." So I said, "Okay, I guess I'll have to file a grievance." And while I was there the man that I spoke to said the conversation I was having with him was completely confidential. And I said, "Well in that case I'll tell you about some of the shit that goes on in my office." And I told him about my boss putting his hands on me, snapping my bra, etc. And he looked at me and said, "You know what you're saying is very serious." And I said, "Listen, I'm not going to press charges. I'm not going to make it public. I just want to let you know that something's going on that shouldn't be going on." He said, "Okay." When I came back to work the next week, my boss wouldn't come in the office. He had a habit of just opening up the door and walking into the office. He stood at the window and talked to me or he stood at the door and talked to me - but he wouldn't come in. And personnel called me and told me to come down, they wanted to speak to me about something so I went and I saw the same man again and he said to me, "If you so much as breathe a word of this to anyone you will be sued for slander or libel. So I would watch who you talk to and what you say." Which is why I'm not mentioning where I work or my last name. He said, "We're willing to offer you a compromise. We'll take that letter out of your file and give you four months to find another job within this corporation and then, if you don't find the job within the four months

~~(end of tape)~~

with our assistance, and then, if you don't find a job within the four months you'll have to resign. " There was a very heavy job freeze going on at the time and it didn't look like I was going to be able to find another job. As it was, I resigned before the four months were up even though I didn't find a job. My boss was so threatening about bringing a libel suit against me that I'm still afraid to talk about the whole thing and especially to mention names.

Susan
Madar:

25

25

My name is Susan Madar, and I am 28 years old. I have been a working woman for ten years in which I have had jobs ranging from switchboard operator to working in a lumber yard. Right now, I ~~do child care~~, ^{support myself by taking care of child} not only because I feel I am skilled in working with kids, but also because of the harassment I have felt on many jobs.

I am going to talk about the other side of sexual harassment, the other side of objectifying women, reducing us to the status of a sexual object, judged only on our attractiveness to men.

4
This is all very difficult for me to say,; ^{not only do} i feel ~~shame~~ that what i am saying is unmentionable but i myself feel shame, that i am admitting something awful about myself. All of us as women are judged by a male standard of attractiveness, and my harassment comes from not measuring up to this standard. This has meant being treated as if i don't exist by the male world. I have taken this on myself and acted ^{many times} as if were an ^{invisible} non-person, ~~invisible~~. ^{fact that judgment measurement}
This has affected first my ability to get a job, and second my treatment on the job. I consider this all a part of sexual harassment: treating me not as a working person dependent on an income, but as a woman being measured against some sexual standard.

Job interviews were always terrible experiences for me--i dreaded them very much. We have been taught that personal appearance is a very important criterion in getting a job; it was clear to me that this judgment extended beyond neatness and tidiness. When i ~~was~~ applied for a job as a waitress, i got a job at a truck stop for small wages and hardly any tips. The more lucrative waitress jobs were not open to me. For ~~a~~ better paying office work, the want ads clearly said they wanted an 'attractive girl'. When i applied for a job as a library assistant, i ~~desperately needed it to~~ was working my way through school and desperately needed the money to support myself. The man who interviewed me had a reputation for hiring mostly beautiful women. He put my application aside and did not call me. I did eventually get the job because a friend of mine worked there also, and she signed me up for the last available hours. i ended up working there $4\frac{1}{2}$ years. We were rated on our performance eventually, and i was given an outstanding rating. The tension created by this always affected me on the job-- i was never allowed to forget that there was a standard being applied. I think this is true of all women, no matter what they do. Why else must a woman who is working as say, a computer programmer have to worry about her personal appearance, and what she wears to work every day?

It was a ^{more} positive experience in general when i was working with all women. However, women frequently adopt the male standard, ^{and ~~father~~ ~~being~~ judged by the way we look} treating me with contempt. I think our looks is all a part of keeping us competing, keeping us divided against each other. I would be filled with resentment for the more attractive women, they were able to put me down.

When i was working with men, this tension was always present. i always knew ~~i~~^{was} being judged by the men. I also had to deal with watching these men flirting with and giving attention to other women. This put me in a position of feeling terrible about myself, feeling left out. I of course resented the other women and the attention they were getting. Last year i was working for a temporary agency. I was considered a highly skilled worker, i typed 80 words a minute and had much experience. However, the men who wanted a 'temporary girl' also expected an added decoration in their office. When i showed up to work as a receptionist/^{type} for a manager of a symphony, he was obviously disappointed as he looked me over. He basically ignored me and made me feel very out of place in his office for a few days and then sent me home saying that he decided he did not need a temporary worker after all.

(S)

58

I was⁴ also sent with another woman to type in an office in a bank.

The set up of the office was very sexist, the women did the shitwork, and the men acted very important at their desks, making all the decisions.

The other woman played along with the men and their egos. There wasn't

much to do--for some reason the man in charge hired 2 of us when there

was only enough work for one person. Most of the time we had to sit

with nothing to do. When there was work to be typed, ^{however,} the men usually

made a big point of giving it to her and only occasionally to me.

I have also been harassed sexually in the more obvious way. When i

was a switchboard operator, we kept our headphones in a closet. The

male supervisor would follow me in and pinch me. When i was a waitress,

virtually all my customers were men and they would make remarks like

"Let's lie down and do it here, baby," and follow me into the back

room ^{room} to "feel me" up and down. A co-worker at the library would

corner me and try to kiss me when we were alone in the elevator.

How did this make me feel along with the other type of experiences i

have been relating? I felt anger, yet a confused anger. I was flattered.

I felt insulted and degraded. Yet it was very difficult for me to stand

up for myself because i^{not} didn't want to admit i didn't deserve it--

underneath i felt that i really didn't. At best i would jokingly get

(4)

I was~~d~~ also sent with another woman to type in an office in a bank.

The set up of the office was very sexist, the women did the shitwork, and the men acted very important at their desks, making all the decisions.

The other woman played along with the men and their egos. There wasn't

much to do--for some reason the man in charge hired 2 of us when there

was only enough work for one person. Most of the time we had to sit

with nothing to do. When there was work to be typed, the men usually

made a big point of giving it to her and only occasionally to me.

I have also been harassed sexually in the more obvious way. When i

was a switchboard operator, we kept our headphones in a closet. The

male supervisor would follow me in and pinch me. When i was a waitress,

virtually all my customers were men and they would make remarks like

"Let's lie down and do it here, baby," and follow me into the back

room ^{room} to "feel me" up and down. A co-worker at the library would

corner me and try to kiss me when we were alone in the elevator.

How did this make me feel along with the other type of experiences i

have been relating? I felt anger, yet a confused anger. I was flattered.

I felt insulted and degraded. Yet it was very difficult for me to stand

up for myself because i^{not} didn't want to admit i didn't deserve it--

underneath i felt that i really didn't. At best i would jokingly get

myself out of the situation. I didn't want to offend the men. they ha
too much power over me. I often pretended it didn't happen, since i w
always afraid that i was only being made a fool of.

I ^{consider} ~~wonder~~ all these experiences a part of sexual harassment. I felt
that i was being judged by my looks instead of my work. And if one
woman is being openly harassed on a work situation, the other women ar
too. They feel incompetent, and wonder 'what's wrong with me'. A
woman who is getting older, put on a few pounds, cant afford a new
outfit--all this is liable to threaten her working status, and she kno
it.

I think we all to some degree experience both sides of this. Any woma
no matter how she is made to feel about her appearance in general, is
subject to advances. We are kept guessing, kept worried, kept competi
There's something wrong with us if we are hassled, something wrong wit
us if we aren't. It's always our fault because we aren't the ones in
control, so we can't win.

Denise Rush : My name is Denise Rush and I'm a union committeewoman at a local factory. I've been employed there for two and a half years. The sexual harrassment I have had to deal with there is not any one specific incident, its the attitudes that are there all the time;Although there are a lot of women on the floor I'm working on, I am the only woman in my particular section. The men have conversations all day long focusing on women as sex objects, bad working conditions, and motorcycles. It seems like those are the only things they ever talk about.

Sometimes during the day women from the offices -mostly secretaries wearing skirts- walk across the floor. Every time this happens nearly all of the men stop whatever they're doing and eyeball the woman - making comments about the woman's legs or saying things like, "Hey, look at the knockers on that chick!" Then they'll all laugh. Their language concentrates completely on women as sexual objects. The men don't usually make comments about the women working on the floor - since they're dressed in work clothes, pants and things. Only if the men think a woman on the floor is really ugly will they make comments and then they'll say things like, "Boy, what a cow that one is." They're always ribbing really overweight women.

The men also think it's funny to play little games with people. Like there's this one guy they always make fun of - I mean you kind of have to feel sorry for him but he really isn't all there, sort of lacking in common sense. This guy keeps staring at me all the time and his eyes are really scary, like he's raping me with them. Well, the other men think it's funny to manipulate this guy and so they say to him, "Hey, Denise has a crush on you." This guy's so dumb he believes them and starts hanging around me all the time just staring at me, and I'm stuck with telling him it isn't true, I don't have a crush on him and will he please get lost.

Even when they're talking about motorcycles the sexism is still there. They bring out their motorcycle catalogs and there, sprawled across nearly every bike, are Playboy bunny type women with hardly any clothes on. Its just another way the companies try to sell their bikes.

The day the factory was leafleted about this Speak-Out the men really went crazy, yelling, "That's sexual harrassment," at the top of there lungs whenever anybody did anything and then laughing hysterically. Somehow they knew I was involved in it because a lot of the cracks were directed towards me and finally one guy, a technician, came up and slammed the leaflet really hard down on my desk and yelled, " That's sexual harassment!" That was the last straw, it was just too much.

And the worst thing is - working there every day I find myself slipping into the same heads they're into. The atmosphere rubs off. I don't know if I do it for survival or just because its going on around me so much that it rubs off, but I find myself playing those little games too. I find myself saying things to people at work that I wouldn't say to anyone outside - its easy to fall into talking like they do even if you don't thnk like that. Its really astrain to consciously struggle against sexist attitudes all day, every day that I work. Why should women have to deal with that?

~~40~~ ~~40~~
Open Mike
Stuff

Janet Ostreich: I'm Janet Ostreich. I'm twenty-three, I've worked since I was sixteen, mostly as a waitress. I've also been a bartender and worked in a office for a couple of years. Now I'm working as a waitress again. I've been doing that since September. And it's an interesting problem being a waitress that your living wage is ^{earned} ~~made~~ via the tips that you make which is also dependent on the good will of the customers that you're waiting on. Lots ~~of~~ of times it becomes very difficult because being in that position men think you are sexually available as we were talking about before, and that's very hard to deal with because part of your job is to go out and say, "Would you like to order?" and be pleasant and courteous and some men that come in will take it as a sexual come-on. I've had people ~~men~~, leave me dollar tips on a table for a two dollar meal and come up to me afterwards and say, " Why don't we go out to dinner? " And that would be the second time I've ever seen him in my life, the second time he's been in the restuarant and you just go, "Whoa! I can't so that! That's just ridiculous. Or you can be- one day I was pouring a cup of coffee and the coffee urn is right out in front and people can lots of times get themselves a cup of coffee when they come in in the morning and I was getting a cup of coffee for somebody I was waiting on and a ~~man~~ man that was in there came up to the urn to get his own coffee and he reached over and he put his arm around my back and ^{started} rubbing my back and I said, " Let's just cut it out. " He said, " Well, I was just want to feel the fruit." I said, " Not ~~this~~ fruit. " And it was all very- tell him to stop it and just leave it at that. No need to make a scene or make it heavy. And he immediately turned around and ~~I~~ was just flabbergasted,. He turned around and he started yelling at me and calling me a witch and cursing me out in the restuarant and saying, " Well, I just bumped into you and next time I bump into you I'll spill this coffee all over you." And I was going, " WHOA!" and I was shaking and I had to go in the back

and I started - I was in tears by the end, because he was this big man and I was intimidated. It was really awful and fortunately the man who was my boss was very good about it. He said, "Take it easy." And I've never had to wait on that man since then. But every time for the first two weeks after that happened, every time he walked in I was like - I was shaking ^{cause} ~~causes~~ I was just waiting for him to do something else and it was just very heavy to have to put up with that. When you have - oh, so many times - I can think of any number of occasions when you work as a waitress and have the man think that because you are a waitress, you are there and you are available and he has the right to put his arm around you or call you honey or be super friendly because you have to - you're making your money from him and you have to be friendly, that's part of your job and it's happened to me as a bartender and it's happened to me in an office where the boss will assume he has the right to pinch your backside. And you can tell them no and they think it's a big joke. You can't work like that, you just can't! And it shouldn't be, you shouldn't have to!

Deirdre Silverman

Perhaps as many of you, I believed at one time that educated women, women who worked as professionals, women who worked as equals with men were exempt from the kind of sexual harassment that we're talking about, and over the last five years I found out that that is not true. Five years ago when I was pregnant with my first child, it became obvious that my husband wasn't going to be able to find a job and so I went to a convention of my discipline in order to find a job. These conventions are held at large hotels. At the time I was about five and a half months pregnant which, for those of you who don't know, you're not out to here but something is obviously going on. And I didn't want prospective employers to know that I was pregnant until I was ready to tell them so. I didn't wear maternity clothes and I figured they would just think I was plump. In the late afternoon my graduate school was giving a cocktail party, which is usual at this sort of conventions. I had not planned on going because my father was in the hospital, he was having heart surgery and I really wanted to spend as much time with him as I could. So I told the chairman of my graduate school that I wasn't going to be at the party and he said, "Listen you want us to do something for you-get you a job-you better do something for us. After all", he said, "there aren't that many young women in our department." Okay. So I wanted a job so I went to the party and I visited my father at night. At the party I was talking to a man who taught at a college that I very much wanted to get a job at. It was the only job opening anywhere near where I lived at the time. And as we were speaking, and there was a whole bunch of people around us people who went, who were in my classes, people who were friends of mine-he leaned over and dropped his hotel room key in my lap. Okay. So I handed the key back to him- I really didn't know what to do-so I handed it back to him, and he dropped

the key in my lap again and I sort of thrust it back at him and he dropped the key in my lap again he really sort of threw the key in my lap-and said "What's wrong?" And I-I really didn't know what to say. I'm not too good in this situations so I said, probably the dumbest thing I could've said, I said, "Well, I'm married too!-what difference does that make?" And I said, "Well-you know-I'm just really not interested in you." And he said, "That's because you haven't gotten to know me yet." And finally-I was really desperate by this time because I really didn't want him to know I was pregnant-I blurted out, "I'm five and a half months pregnant!" And he drew back and he said "Five and a half months? Five and a half months? and he disappeared and I decided not to continue trying to get a job at his university. Okay. Now that's-that's a real funny story but there's a dark side to it. That I was used as a sex object by my graduate school professors, that to this man my interest in his college was an opportunity for rather crude sexual advances, which really humiliated me in front of my classmates and professors, that I gave up a possible job and the only chance I had to stay in an area that I really loved and late in my pregnancy I had travel several hundred miles in order to avoid reminders or repetitions of that incident.

I began teaching at Ithaca College. Most of my interaction is with students to whom at least theoretically I'm in a position of authority. What this means though to male students when it's a female professor can sometimes be interesting. Last spring at the end of a year long course a male student approached me and he said that a number of students had been talking and they thought that the teaching of the course would be greatly improved if I would shave my legs. Regardless of how you feel about unshaven legs I think it's important to understand what this statement says. It could be anything-it could be wearing make-up, it could be wearing a padded bra, it could be not wearing a bra-it could be any sort of physical thing like

Laren Sauvigné

I think we all want to thank all of the women that have spoken just now. (applause) It takes a great deal of courage. (applause) We're running way behind schedule and have a lot of things to do yet today so we're going to have the open mike be shorter than was originally planned, but for the next, say, twenty minutes women who want to come up from the audience are invited to do that—to give their own testimony about their own experiences. Again let me say that the same rules prevail—that is you speak personally from your own experience and the audience is not supposed to be commenting but is only—we're here to listen and learn from one another. And let me also say that it's important that when you come up to speak you not mention any names—the names of the male perpetrators. There, Working Women United has a vehicle where we can do that and we'll talk about that later but at this point in the Speak-Out it's not allowed—it just can't be done. Anyone who wants to come up you can just come up this way—give Lin your name first briefly.

Joyce Stafford

I started up here before because I didn't realize—I sort of live in a dream world—and I didn't realize they had people spoken ahead of time that were gonna—I thought it was open mike. Anyway it just suddenly came into my head that I had something that I thought ought to be said and I was going to talk about experiences as a student and I had several here, which I'm not going to speak about in this area. One incident which resulted in my writing an essay for my English professor the title of which was—"Cocks are a dime a dozen." And I got an "A". I left here and went to Northern Arizona University, to summer school and—okay I'll try—The art professor's first comment was something about women who use painting by number sets and he was quite nasty and I went down, I had never painted before and I went

that. It's impossible to conceive of a situation where students would say to a male professor, your teaching would be greatly improved if you shaved off your beard, or wore a toupee or wore a jacket and a tie, right?

The motivation is very clear. Women faculty members are not only there to teach but they're expected to be sexually attracted to students. You may be a professor, you may have the education and the expertise but you're still a woman and what counts is your physical appearance. I'm the only full time faculty member in my department who's a woman, and my husband is also a member of the department. Because my husband is a member of the department I don't think that any of the men in my department consider me sexually available, except in the sense that all women are available for sexual fantasies. Last summer I was working with a colleague on procedural matters. Suddenly and-and very much out of the blue, he asked me if my husband and I had ever made love in our pond. He proceeded to describe the pleasures of feeling water on one's body and told of a sexual experience he and his wife had shared. I insisted that we return to work and we did. Several months later this man came in to my husband's office and told him the following dream that he had had. "I was lying in bed with my wife and Deirdre came into the room. She kept walking around the bed and talking about her tenure position. And we couldn't get her to leave." (laughter). And my husband said "I need a cup of coffee" and got up and left the room. A number of people have suggested to me that this man is an isolated weird individual. He did not directly proposition me or grab me-I didn't get upset there wasn't any harm. This term was considered for tenure. Tenure at an academic institution is a status, in which if you're given tenure you can go on working there until you retire and if you're not given tenure you have to leave, within a year or two depending on your contract. I would like to quote some material this man has written about me. His written comments

are part of my permanent personnel file and will be seen by numerous faculty members and administrators and they cannot be removed from my file without his permission. Quote, "It is my impression, based upon previous interactions, that if Delrdre Silverman were given tenure and promotion at this college she would have the total security to lionize some of her more unsuspecting assistant professor colleagues before she ate them in front of others."

I think what he means is that I would act like a lion, maul them and then devour them. In various places throughout his writing he refers to me as, and these are all quotes "hard, authoritarian, self-righteous, arrogant, negative, devisive, bitter, immature, absurd, petty, embarrassing, un-professional, outrageous, caustic, destructive, dehumanizing and vicious." (laughter) He goes all the way. This is my situation. I know where this man is coming from I know what his motivation is. But if I were to use some of the incidents I have just described to challenge his accusations against me I would be seen by many of my male colleagues as being just what he accuses me of being. I have sat silently while this man led an attack against me, lied about me; while he misquoted absent faculty members putting negative words in their mouths and this all took place during what is probably the most important decision made about me in my professional life. The anger that I felt has been consuming me for months. I try not to take it out on those around me, I especially try not to take it out on my children- it doesn't always work. An my situation may be resolved, I may get tenure and everything will be alright but as long as men are allowed to exact revenge for their thwarted sexual fantasies as well as more blatant forms of sexual harrassemnt the anger will remain. Thank-you (applause)

OPEN MIKE

Karen Sauvigne'

Laren Sauvigné

I think we all want to thank all of the women that have spoken just now. (applause) It takes a great deal of courage. (applause) We're running way behind schedule and have a lot of things to do yet today so we're going to have the open mike be shorter than was originally planned, but for the next, say, twenty minutes women who want to come up from the audience are invited to do that-to give their own testimony about their own experiences. Again let me say that the same rules prevail-that is you speak personally from your own experience and the audience is not supposed to be commenting but is only-we're here to listen and learn from one another. And let me also say that it's important that when you come up to speak you not mention any names-the names of the male perpetrators. There, working Women United has a vehicle where we can do that and we'll talk about that later but at this point in the Speak-Out it's not allowed-it just can't be done. Anyone who wants to come up you can just come up this way-give us your name first briefly.

Joyce Stafford

I started up here before because I didn't realize-I sort of live in a dream world-and I didn't realize they had people spoken ahead of time that were gonna-I thought it was open mike. Anyway it just suddenly came into my head that I had something that I thought ought to be said and I was going to talk about experiences as a student and I had several here, which I'm not going to speak about in this area. One incident which resulted in my writing an essay for my English professor the title of which was-"Cocks are a dime a dozen." And I got an "A". I left here and went to Northern Arizona University, to summer school and-okay I'll try- The art professor's first comment was something about women who use painting by number sets and he

... I had never painted before and I went

down in the art room and looked at pictures and I cried for two hours he hurt my feelings so. And he saw me later and he was apologetic. Anyway my third picture-painting-turned out very well and it seemed that he was playing the game, the college game you know, that he was available and he .. said he had milked a lot of cows and things of that nature when I told him I was a farm girl. Anyway I survived the course and I had my picture taken and he told me that I had something, meaning that they liked my art. And- I'm nervous-I went to a ballet shortly after that and this professor was there with his wife and I come up to him and I said-or, he said "hello." I didn't play the game, I mean I knew what it was all about so I had played along with the game so I just gave him a breathless "hi." His wife looked at him and cringed and so it was in my next class-economics class-that I was accused of seducing the man and meanwhile I had read an article in "Psychology" magazine about the machistic (?) male and this explained the whole thing to me, all the harrassment that I had suffered at the hands of a psychologist male professors and everything and its-anxieties of life and death, and it has to do with socioeconomics of our system and the males lack ego development and the humiliation of being a little boy-if they feel powerless where a woman is concerned. So that explained the whole thing to me. At this point I went to the head of the education department at Northern Arizona University-I made an appointment and I said "Look, I had an experience with a professor here and I'm getting damn sick of this sort of thing" and I said, I gave him-I had a xeroxed copy of the article which I gave him. It was researched by a Mexican psychiatrist. I said, "If these men were to marry sexual women and they were to play around, like they are-they'd stone them to death" And he agreed and so anyway it ended up with professors playing an awful lot of basketball after that. And the motto out here is, "To become better educated is to become more human" The professor got divorced and he married a sexual woman so that ended

his problem. (applause)

Karen

I forgot to say that we're going to have to limit speaking at the open mike to 4 or 5 minutes. 3-or 4 or 5 minutes.

Good afternoon, my name is Angela Faust, I'm 26 and I'm here from Buffalo. I live and I work there but I'm from Ithaca, This particular Speak-Out I came down because my mother's Carmita Wood for one reason plus I really believe in, its happened to me many times. But this Speak-Out has brought to mind something that's happened to me that I didn't even realize. Not to go into great detail but I got into business as a partner. As matter of fact in the entertainment business-I book groups and I started out three years ago eith this man when he had no business whatsoever. He was a hustler but he wasn't an organizer. Now, to make a long story short, I did all the shit work. I wrote the letters, I typed everything, I stayed in the office ten or twelve hours a day. Alright, we built up the business to a very profitable thing as of this year. He is now out of financial difficulties, he's in very good shape. I even went to the point of going bankrupt for him to make sure that his business was paid. Business bills were apid. This year I decided well, we're in pretty good shape now it's about time I became a partner pn paper and start kind of doing my own thing and bringing in my own groups and having my own money and save and do the kind of things... And he said "No,no-I don't think that's too cool." "And I said well what do you mean?" Ge said, "Well I don't owe you a thing!" I said "What?" He made it very obvious to me that I was his secretary, even though I wasn't getting paid for it-I was his secretary. I went to one of the meetings with Mom, for this particular organization, about four or five weeks ago I guess, when the whole thing was conceived and the more I listened to women the more I realized,

Hey, this is exactly what's happening to you. He's saying "Look, we're not going to continue our personal relationship if you want to be a business partner and if you want part of this business. It's just, you can have one or the other, but you are my girl and therefore you're not my business partner." I am now not with him personally. Okay, I split from him. I'm working for him at this point only for the fact of I'm getting my own connections. And I think he realizes it but he doesn't really want to accept it. And the sexual harrassment was so great it was unreal. Since I split with him and I'm now living with a roommate-a girl, ~~(go to legal pad paper - no. 70)~~ when he comes in in the morning there is always something wrong. He has a chip on his shoulder this big. And he makes my day extremely agravating. If I go to lunch for more than a half hour or if I'm sitting downstairs talking to a man, its just unreal,, the sexual harassment and mental harassment he gives me when I come upstairs. Now its not going to last much longer, hopefully, after this Speak-Out. You need to get reoriented towards the fact that you don't have to put up with this shit. I'm an intelligent woman and I've got a good business mind and if I left this man he'd lose a lot of money. I know groups that have come to me and said, " Hey, look, you leave this business, I want to go with you, " because I'm good at handling people and I'm fair and honest and I treat the women the same way, and that makes a difference. We've had several groups who have come, where the musicians have come in and said, " We're going to pay our girl \$100 a week." Yeah, they may be making \$250 but they figure she doesn't do as much, she's not ~~xx~~ as important. Really. Its just ridiculous - if their girl wasn't up there - there are times when I can't sell a group because there's no girl in it. Not just because of the sexual thing but because ~~k~~ she's pleasant. And my time is up. Thank-you.

Louisa:

My name ~~is~~ is Louisa and I'm eighteen and I worked for about a month or two at a local delicatessen. It wasn't my boss who harassed me, but the young students who came in from the local colleges. And they'd write me notes, they'd be dead drunk,, I mean they were so obnoxious! And I'd have to work on my feet, serving beer. I was only seventeen, I wasn't supposed to be there in the first place but I really needed the money. They'd jeer at me, make me do things - make me do the run around - get them a couple of straws, spill everything so I'd have to clean it up. They'd laugh at me, they'd jeer at me, make fun of me, just be totally obnoxious. So from that experience - I didn't ~~mg~~ recognize it outright, I didn't think to myself, "this is really crazy," I said, " This job makes me uptight and I'm going to quit." And so I did. For the past while I've been housecleaning and I've been isolated from people because I think working with the public means I'm going to be harassed by men sexually, that my body - that the ~~xx~~ way they think of me is going to be about my body, and they're going to harass me and I'm afraid of this. Coming to ~~kix~~ this Speak-Out makes me think more and more about myself, my job, my future - how am I going to be treated? It really is scary. I don't - I'm so aware of it now. It really scares me. Will my job be like my waitress job only on a higher level where I won't get paid as much where the boss will be constantly jeering at me? And I'm afraid of it. And as a young woman looking out, I do want to work. I look at the situation, I hear other women ~~xx speakingxxxxxx~~ and I'm really glad women are getting together and speaking ~~p~~ out about it so maybe more women won't have to go through the same thing.

Donna Thomas: [Voice throughout is faltering, very choked up, quiet

My name is Donna Thomas and I'm 27 years old and I've been waitressing off and on for about nine years. Anyone.... I've heard some statistics that 6 out of 10 women are sexually harassed on the job and I can't believe that its not 10 out of 10. Anyway, I think the most intense thing that ever happened to me, experience that, well the point is that if you admit to havingg ~~xxx~~ any sexuality at all, if you're sexually available to anybody, that men believe - a lot of men will believe - that you're sexually availeable to them, you know, just ~~anybody~~ anybody. Anyway, I'd been waitressing on the night shift at a diner and there are a lot of regular customers come around alot. And I had gone home with this one man ~~a cat~~ a couple of times, you know, it may or may not have been a good idea but I did it and it was okay. A couple of weeks after this happened one night I came home, got ready for bed. At 7:00 o'clock in the morning there's a knock on the door. Two men who had been at the diner when I left. They said, " Can we come in? " I said, " What.... what's going on? " They said this man, the man I had been having a relationship with, is supposed to meet us up here. And I said, " I, ah..." And it was pretty stupid of me but I let them in. I said, Okay, see if you can explain if over a cup of coffee." And they sat down and I had answered the door in my nightgown and I went back in and put on ~~xx~~ my bathrobe. One man said, "Why'd you put your bathrobe on? Take ~~thxx~~ off your bathrobe," I said, " Look, you want a cup of coffee, I'll give you a cup of coffee but just tell me what's going on. " One man perceded to fall asleep on the couch and the other man sat there and said - I'm going to give him a name - John - " John said he would meet us here. He's going someplace else and he'll meet us back up here. John said you'd give us anything

you wanted - anything we wanted. " And he just kept repeating that over and over. And I said, " Look, you're crazy." and he would - the more I'd ~~say~~ say to just stop it, stop it - he would say - he would go into more detail about what he wanted to do and if I would do it with this man, why wouldn't I do it with him? And finally I told him, I told him to be quiet, that my roommate was asleep in the other room and they realized that I wasn't alone and they finally went away because they were afraid of what was going to happen, but its like, I was totally helpless. There was nothing I could do and after that there was nothing I could do to prevent them from leerong - bringong it up all the time at work. I think a place like that it was more intense and worse but its something that is happening on many different levels. Every waitress of the world is getting it and in most cases you're helpless.

Barbara Anger: Hello. My name is Barbara Anger and about _ years ago I worked for the New York Telephone Company and we were expected to wear heels and a dress and then come sit in front of a switch-board and be polite,. And usually I worked the Saturday night shift. Everybody was very drunk when they called in , it was very rare that a Saturday night would go by without some sort of telephone xcall, where somebody would callup and say," Hey, baby, you know what I'm doing in the booth?" And percede to tell me how they were jerking off and all the elaborate details. What I was expected to to was say," Thank-you very much . Can I do something for you ? Can I put a call through ?" And ix if I said,

"Fuck - off!" or anything like that I was reprimanded. And ~~think~~ I think that was one kind of sexual abuse. Another one was, I was working as a draftswoman in Groton and it was national secretaries week and I wasn't a secretary but this guy needed a secretary to go out to lunch with him and I was one of the women there he could ask and I said, " No, I don't want to go. I'd just rather work." He's an old man who used to own the company but he sold it and he has some sort of psychological influence on everybody. So the secretaries came to me and said, " Come on, he's an old man - do it, do it, do it." And somebody else came to me and said, "Do it." So I said, "Okay." So I said, " Okay, I'll go out with you." And he said, "But you'll have to wear a dress." You see I never wore a dress to work and I said, " No, I won't wear one." And finally he said, " Okay, you can come even if you don't wear a dress. " So I figured, well I won that battle so maybe I'll wear a dress . So I wore a dress, which was a big mistake because everybody said, " Why don't you dress like that every day, Barbara. You look so good. it really helps you." So I went to lunch with this guy and I got there and of course he pumped me with lots of drinks and I figured, well, it's okay to have a few drinks, but as soon as I had one drink he wanted to touch my breast. And he wasn't even subtle about it at all,. He just said, "What do you think about those things under your clothes? My, could I touch them?" You know, in a restaurant! And I'm going, "Will you please leave me alone, take your hand off my leg," and finally it got to the point where I said, "Fuck you!" And he was amazed, that a young woman should say, "Fuck you." I had to go from there back to work to get my car and to finish the day and in the car he was all over me and I got back to work and I said, "Okay, it's all over with. I'm going back to work." And he came into my office and he hung around and every chance he'd get he'd try to kiss me because he thought he'd given me his lunch, he deserved a kiss. And I refused to kiss him and from that day on I never spoke to

him but everybody in the office kept saying, " Why aren't you nicer to him? I mean this poor fellow..." Poor fellow?! Nobody thought about poor me and I think that kind of harassment goes on at lot's of levels and women should not feel guilty about it. (applause)

CHERYL SENA: I'm here to talk about my short career as a filmmaker. I was living in New York City and I was making-I had gotten sort of a grant and I was making a film. We were shooting during the day and I needed a job at night. I had had too many jobs already where I had been harrassed sexually and I decided I didn't want to take a job as a waitress because I knew I just couldn't deal with that. I decided to be a taxicabs driver and I drove taxicabs at night and I worked on my films during the day. And both things going on simultaneously was real heavy-the taxicab driving stuff was like-I thought that I was out of it, I would dress for work as grungy as I possibly could. I wasn't trying to be attractive I was just trying to be left alone and I really would go out of my way to look-just you know.....It didn't make a difference. I got constantly harrassed, constantly bothered. I wasn't able to get out of it by,. The conversation would always start, "Oh, you're a woman cab driver. What're you doing for and do you want to come home with me?". Well that would be going on during the night and during the day I would be trying to make my film and what would happen was that-first, I was working with this one man and he was a big director and I really, I really wanted to get a job from him. He was making the film and he really needed people and I saw all the men around me playing up to him in whatever ways men play up to men for jobs. And he never really paid much attention to me at all and one day he pulled me aside and said "You know the only way you're going to make it in the film world is if you sleep with me." Well, I didn't make it that way. Later on I got this other grant and I decided I'd go out on my own and I went around to studios and I took my own finished work to try to show it to people. And what happened was I wouldn't usually get into the office, nobody particularly paid any attention to me and the couple of times that I did I would be pretty easily brushed aside, nobody ever asked to see my work, nobody was interested. They didn't give me a chance. They didn't even say "Oh, what did you do, or what..."

I was ousted automatically because men did not want to deal with a woman

filmmaker, its a very male business. They just weren't interested. And after awhile I met this one man and I don't remember his name so it doesn't make any difference, and he was the director for a small film company and we were having interview or something and he said, "Well I'm making this film and I need a production manager." That was all and I was ecstatic. He was offering me this job as production manager and it was a very well paying job. and it was the type of job that although it wasn't exactly where I wanted to go, if I got the job I'd have a place to go from. I just really wanted the job. He'd say "Okay, let's go out for cocktails" and luckily-luckily or unluckily-I was working at night so I could never quite manage it very well. and I would get out of it a lot. So instead of going out for cocktails I would make it so we would go out for coffee. Coffee seemed less intimidating and less prone to problems than a cocktail. Finally he started talking about the script or talking about what the responsibilities of the job would be. This was after a few sessions with him and he says "You know look-we should get together and really talk about the specifics of the job. I have a house in Poconos, why don't we go away for the weekend?" Oh, I don't know-I really-the point is- so I said "I don't know" and he said, "Well think about it" and he'd call me up and I'd go "I don't know, I don't know." But what went on in my head was, I wanted that job. You know, I didn't want to sleep with him but I really wanted that job and he called up once and I don't remember exactly whether I said yes or thought yes but I was considering it. I didn't want to sleep with but I wanted the job so much and he was holding it over my head, that I was willing right then, to sleep with him, in order to get the job. And that was a feeling of having to play that round to get a job and I'm sure any man wouldn't have had to do that, they wouldn't have to be approached like that. Finally he called back and I said, no, I just couldn't do it and I left New York City real flipped between taxicab driving and trying to get a job this way. I'd just really had it. I was real freaked out and I haven't been able to do anything with any of that ever

since then just because I couldn't handle that kind of pressure anymore.
(Applause).

MARY MOON: My name is Mary and I'd like to talk about the kinds of things that happens to young girls. These experiences I'm going to talk about happened about 10 to 12 years ago when I was 14 to 19 and I think there's only been one other speaker here who mentioned working when she was 16 and I really identified with that and I want to talk more about that. When I was a girl my mother had a bakery that was how we could make ends meet, if you could call it that. We lived in a farmhouse and half the house was the bakery and I guess looking back it was kind of an incestuous neighborhood because everybody on our road and they all needed work and on and off different people in a two or three mile radius would be working in the bakery for probably less than minimum wages and my first experiences when I was 13 or 14 was being approached by the fathers of my girlfriends who wanted to get the make on me. At that time I had no idea what sexuality even was. I was very embarrassed and somehow or other, I don't remember how I got through those experiences but I did. Then when I was 15 the bakery went bankrupt for the second time. I had to get work. I went out-there was a new motel that had been built. They were building the Finger Lakes Race Track and that was a big deal and money was coming into the area which was formerly just a farm area and this motel was built near the thruway exit about a mile from my home. It was very convenient-they needed work-they had a hard time keeping maids and people who worked in the function. So when I was 15 I worked illegally. The manager knew I was only 15 and he hired me anyway. I worked as a chambermaid and he treated me in a very fatherly manner except that I worked about 60 hours a week with no overtime. But because that he was very fatherly to me and didn't approach me sexually. He treated me like a child, which I still was in a way. I was being exploited in terms of child labor but that's beside the point. I worked there for about a year and I was constantly harassed by male customers who would come into the rooms, I would be cleaning the room and they would check it and ask

since _____
(Apples _____)

MARY MOON: _____

happen _____
about _____
one _____
identical _____
my _____
call _____
and _____
every _____
people _____
probab _____
14 war _____
the _____
very _____
those _____
for _____
that _____
was a _____
a far _____
from _____
time _____
15 I _____
way. _____
ner _____
that _____
me like _____
of _____
year _____
the _____

me if I wanted to stay. They would offer me ten dollars. And I would get extremely-I guess I really didn't know what was happening and I would go home and I wouldn't be able to tell my parents because I was so embarrassed about it and I would be blushing from the moment it happened until the next morning when I would get up to go back to work again.. Still not really realizing what was going on, but knowing that there was something -I guess the thing that made it so cruel was that I was very young and didn't have any experience. Had I been 23, 24, 28, 30-had I had a variety of experiences I would have known even what was going on but I didn't even know what men looked like and didn't know what sexuality was, I had never heard the word intercourse or anything like that. So it was a very difficult situation. When I was 17 I left that job and I got a job in a factory. Had the same things happening to me, I was still very naive. When I was 18 I got a job at the race track walking thoroughbreds early in the morning, around five in the morning, and also after the races. Had the same things happening to me over and over again by the grooms who worked there and just thank that it's really-it's a whole different thing when you're very young and you're very naive and I think maybe many of us can remember back to those times too. And I not really sure what I want to draw from this but it's really important somehow there has to be some protection for younger women-especially women underage who are put in situations where they have to react with a great deal of maturity which perhaps they haven't learned because they've been sheltered or whatever. And that's all. Thank you. (Applause).

MARY SHELLEY: Alright, my name is Mary Shelley and I really identify with the woman who, was talking about negative sexual harassment or you know the unattractiveness sort of thing. And the reason why is because I'm a lesbian, an unmentionable word so far. I worked as a secretary at Cornell for a year and the second-oh, in the psychology department (audience laughs)-it's an important place. And the second day that I was working there-

I used to talk for gay liberation, go around and talk at different places about being gay and stuff and it was in Elmira that I went to give a talk and there were three people from the psychology department there, where I worked. And for ever after that as long as I worked there I felt a negative sexual harassment, it that-that I, if I wanted to make a career of it I couldn't make it because of something sexual. And that fear is a harassment. And that's all I have to say. (Applause).

SHARON RUSH: Hi, my name is Sharon and I'll be as fast as I can. In September I started out at graduate school in Albany working on a Master's in criminal justice. As long as I can remember I've wanted to be a lawyer, and especially a judge, as I thought I would acquaint myself with the criminal justice system, by getting a Masters degree first and then going on for a law degree. Well, needless to say I got cornered in a professor's office three weeks into the term. I had an assistantship. I didn't know what to do. I could either go along with him and get A's or work my head off and not get A's-anything less than a C, maybe just a C if I was lucky. So I what I did was, I quit, and it's one of the hardest things I've ever done in my life. I lost a lot of self-respect-I'm not a quitter. But I have to live with it. My family didn't understand, a lot of people don't understand. (Speaker crying from here on). And now I have to put it on law school applications and it's hard for women to get into law school these days and that's just going to make it harder. And I hope we can do something for ourselves. (Applause).

LIN FARLEY: We have a whole lot to talk about before this concludes and we're running out of time and what we have to talk about is exactly what we can do. And we are really

today. So-two very brief announcements...-one-please try to smoke in the lobby if you possible can and two-Huckleberry upstairs needs a diaper and we don't know who the mommy is. (laughter) And now I want to introduce, and I don't think she needs any introduction-

They would offer me ten dollars. And I would
I really didn't know what was happening and I would
be able to tell my parents because I was so embar-
would be blushing from the moment it happened until
I would get up to go back to work again.. Still not
was going on, but knowing that there was something
made it so cruel was that I was very young and
inexperience. Had I been 23, 24, 28, 30-had I had a varie
I have known even what was going on but I didn't eve
like and didn't know what sexuality was, I had never
course or anything like that. So it was a very dif-
I was 17 I left that job and I got a job in a fac
happening to me, I was still very naive. When I was
a track walking thoroughbreds early in the morning,
ning, and also after the races. Had the same thing
d over again by the grooms who worked there and ju
its a whole different thing when you're very young
and I think maybe many of us can remember back to
I not really sure what I want to draw from this but
somehow there has to be some protection for younger
underage who are put in situations where they have
deal of maturity which perhaps they haven't learned
unheltered or whatever. And that's all. Thank you.

name is Mary Shelley and I really identify with th
about negative sexual harrassment or you know the
of thing. And the reason why is because I'm a les
word so far. I worked as a secretary at Cornell
and-oh, in the psychology department(audience laug
And the second day that I was working there-

Carmita Wood: ...that's heavy. Working Women United - what is it? Well, it's a bunch of women who have gotten together and worked very hard to have this Seak-Out. There weren't too many of us to start out with. We're getting more and more all the time. We need you, Most of you are young women, you're the ones who are going to change it. You're the ones that are going to change the laws. You're the ones who have to go into executive positions, ~~xxx~~ you've got to be lawyers, ~~xx~~ you've got to be the people who are going to change it for us older women. I'm among that group. Sexual harassment - we've heard it today, we know what it is. It's just - it's too heavy for me to even talk about. I can't even talk about my own case today. There's a couple of women out in Arizona who have a law suit against a firm because the boss harassed them sexually on the job - both of them, not just one. This man was ambitious, he got both of them. They had to quit. They've got a law suit against him. We don't know how that's going to work out. There's another one in Florida. There's another case in Wisconsin. We're not alone. ~~xxxxxx~~ I'm not alone. I thought I was alone, you know, until I started this, and I'm appalled at the fact that - I think the statistics are even higher - better than six out of ten. It's got to be at least eight out of ~~xxx~~ ten. What do we need? What do we have to do? We've got to get child care legislation. We've got to get more maternity benefits. We have got to stop sexual intimidation. This is an intolerable working condition, we can not put up with it. We're losing our self respect. We're losing much, much more. We just can't do it. We've changed the credit laws. We changed the rape laws. We can change this situation. We can only change it by being together. We've got to have representation in government. We've got to have women in decision making positions in management. We've got to have professional women. Out of union

apprenticeship programs last year there were three thousand programs. Women had ten. Ten out of three thousand is - that's not a very good average. We've got to get rid of the junior status at a job. Men go in as draftsmen, electronic technicians, accountants - women go in as junior draftsmen, junior accountants, junior technicians. Women get paid less because of titles. That's the way they get away from it. The law says equal pay for equal jobs. That's bullshit! We've got to organize. We've got to work. We've got to talk to each other. We've got to be strong and we've got to forget about this bullshit of being taught to instinctively dislike and distrust each other. How many times have you heard a woman say, " Oh, well, I can't talk to another woman. I'd rather talk to a man. He'll keep my secrets for me." That's bull too. They tell each other. All the rules out there are made by men. You're young women. You're going to be going into the business world. Many of you already are. We didn't make the rules, but we've got to live by their rules. In the restaurants, in the banks, in the factories - and incidently, I quit my job as an administrative assistant but I only had a high school education. I've been a maid. I've been a waitress. I've been a lab technician. Lab technicians - they wash petri dishes. That's what I did for eight hours a day, wash the agar-agar out of petri dishes. Oh, it's a great job. Loved it, I've worked in a factory. I've worked in a five and ten. I've been a soda jerk. I've had about every kind of job there could be and I can't remember one job that I ~~wasn't~~ wasn't in some way sexually harassed. The first job I had as a waitress I was sixteen years old and the boss took me downstairs to show me the wine cellar. That wasn't what he wanted to show me. I was scared to death. I didn't tell my mother or father about it. My father would've killed him, if I'd gone home and told him. I needed that job. It's just - it's too much for women

to take and we just can't put up with it any more. We've got to... Working Women United wants to do more than just change sexual intimidation. We want ~~women~~ to change a lot of laws. A lot of things that women need in business. We want women up there in power, whether it's in - both in government and in management. Now - in order to get this we've got to get together. We've got to organize. Very few women started what we're doing now. We got this Speak-Out.- Wgot a good turn out. We need you, we need you desperately, to work with us, to give your time, to give your commitment to us. Help us change the laws. Two weeks from today we're going to have a meeting , here, on Sunday afternoon. We need women to come and work. We need women to organize to fight all these different problems. Working Women United wants to protect women. from this kind of thing on the job. Why should women have to put up with it, just because we're women? It's not fair. (Question from the audience: What sort of things will you be working on?) We don't know yet. ~~That's why~~ That's why we're getting together - to talk about what we are going to work on and what are the most prominent - that's why these questionnaires will help us out. Fill out the questionnaires. There's a place on there I believe, isn't there Lin, for your own problems that you're having. We're going to put these questinaires together. Women getting together two weeks from now are going to talk about whatever it is you want to do, what you ~~think~~ feel is the biggest problem. If you think about it, do you realize what we could do? I mean if you dream about it what could we do? We could close the bank. We could shut off the telephone company. We could close the factories. (applause) I mean we could stop this whole damn town! We could stop this whole damn country! They need us, they have to have us and well, there's just no end to the things that we can do. A man once said, " United we stand, divided we fall." Okay, let's take over that model and stand

6-
together and let's change the way things are.

Lin Farley: We're running out of time. Denise Rush was supposed to add her voice to Carmita's. We're just going to dispense with that mainly because the questionnaire that we've been talking about is really, really important. In terms of what you can do, right now with the feelings that you're sitting on - the first thing you can do.... well, I'll let Susan do that, but wait a minute - I'm so mad I can't stand it. I want to answer the question of the woman who asked what this organization is going to deal with. Look, I've been on a job for a year and a half now that's dealing with the question of women and work. I want to say ~~xxx~~ this - women are pre-labor movement in this country. We don't even have unions to protect us. We are now - there is something like 33 million women in the work force. Barely 20% of that 33 million have any kind of protection between them and their employer. Sexual harassment is just the beginning of what women have to fight and we have to turn this situation around and the only way we're going to turn it around is by having meetings like this one, by ~~xxx~~ talking about the reality of what we've experienced, about the fact that we're still going through child labor exploitation, that we're still being exploited as women. You know, one of the major problems that the National Department of Labor is trying to talk about is the children who are under-nourished, who are mentally retarded, who don't stand a chance in life because they have a woman as ~~xxx~~ the head of a household and not a man and because that ~~xxx~~ woman can't make decent wages and can't get a decent job. Those are the kind of things also that this organization has to talk about. What's really fantastic about

1 hour 15 min
sexual harassment on the job is that it cuts through all the bullshit that we don't have anything in common with other women. I'm the secretary to the president at Cornell University, I don't have, ~~xxx~~ anything in common with the woman who's slinging hash at the State Street Diner. That's not true and we've heard that it's not true here today. We've got something in common that cuts through all of that. The ways that they have kept us apart and what cuts through it is the fact that I don't care what my job title is or my job description is, or how fancy-assed it seems, the boss can still say, "You go down for me, honey, or you don't have a job tomorrow" and there's not too much I can do about it and it happens everywhere all the time. I just had to get that off my chest. (applause) That's what we're going to talk about and that's two weeks from today right here in this building at one o'clock. We'll get started. You saw what we can do on sexual harassment. We're going to turn this town upside down.

Susan Meyer: Don't anyone leave. The last thing is to fill out this questionnaire. They really are incredibly important. There are no statistics, no data at all on the occurrence of this. (Audience question - Where are they/?) Wait, oh, they're going to be passed out now. They'll be passed out to you. - I'll explain - I think the directions are self-explanatory pretty much on the questionnaire. It's anonymous - you don't have to put your name on it. It's very important to answer as many questions as you can though, answer all of them,, because that will make the data more - hang together better. If ~~xxxxxxxx~~ you have any questions the women who are passing them out to you will answer any questions you have about the questionnaire, any problems about them. It's very important to answer

as many questions as possible. There's one question on there about place of employment, where you're working now or where sexual harassment occurred. You don't have to answer that - its optional. If you choose to ~~xxx~~ you can. But all the other questions are important to answer. I guess that's about it. Would everyone fill it out and if you don't have a chance to finish it now before you leave, mail it to ~~xxx~~ Working Women United. Its important that we get these results (Audience question: When is the meeting in two weeks?) The meeting is May ~~18~~ ~~1~~ 18 at one o'clock, right here in this building. I'd like to see a lot of women turn out because I think we can really do something about this - and get some more energy and commitment from women. Oh, also, this is really important. We didn't put this on with no money. It cost a lot of money to do this - to rent the hall, make up the leaflets, and do everything and we ~~xxx~~ also need money to keep going, so anything you can spare, there's cans outside when you leave. Just put in a quarter, put in whatever you can afford and its going to keep the organization going, So its really important also,. The address is : Working Women United, Box 732. Post Office Box 732, Ithaca, New York, 14850. Yeah, there are also pencils. Raise your hand if you don't have anything to write with. People with pencils, please look at the raised hands and pass them out.

Listen, also its very important if anyone has a story to tell that you didn't want to get up and talk about today, you can call - the Human Affairs Program is working with Working Women United and we're using the phones there - you can ~~x~~ call and get together with us, We've got two lawyers who are helping us free. They're willing to talk to any woman about her particular case. We didn't

have time to explain all the legal ramifications of this, but its important to get women coming forward and making legal movements on this. Its a good time to bring these cases forward, there's a lot of publicity and it looks like Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act even covers this and we have to get that enforced. We have to get a specific ruling. So call 256-5299, its on the fact sheet,. If you know anyone who has a story, you can come and you can talk about it totally confidentially. Or you ~~xxxxx~~ have ~~the~~ a freind that has a story - they're being harassed now and they don't know what to do, they can't get unemployment because its not an x acceptable reason - they can x call us and talk to us and we can get together to see what thay can do legaly to stop it.