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The Safety of Women on College Campuses: Implications of Evolving Paradigms in Postsecondary Education [October 2014]

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Guest Editor Introduction for Volume 2

The Safety of Women on College Campuses: Implications of Evolving Paradigms in
Postsecondary Education

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INTRODUCTION TO THE SPECIAL ISSUE: Volume Two

The Safety of Women on College Campuses: Implications of Evolving Paradigms in
Postsecondary Education

A Two-Part Special Issue

Carol E. Jordan

A National Scientific Meeting and Two-Volume Special Issue

This volume serves as the second in a two-part special issue focusing on the victimization of college women. Asserting that the fields of violence against women and postsecondary education both still lack a detailed understanding of the presence of victimization on college campuses, how to respond to its aftermath, and how to prevent its occurrence, in the summer of 2013 the University of Kentucky Center for Research on Violence Against Women hosted a national scientific meeting on this topic.¹ Presentations made at the meeting and related papers were compiled into a two-volume special issue. The special issue includes seventeen main papers and discussant responses.

Volume 1 of the special issue appeared in July 2014. Its opening spoke to the current shifts in models of postsecondary education and highlighted implications of those evolving paradigms on the safety of the nation's university women. Articles in Volume One addressed a range of topics, including conceptual and measurement issues; the academic impact of victimization; and the legal and service responses that have been made by universities. Sherry Hamby; Callie Rennison and Lynn Addington; and Christopher Krebs offered reviews and a discussant paper that spoke to the construct of violence and that identified limitations in the current definitions used in the field. To the discussion on types of violence, Joanne Belknap and

Nitika Sharma proffered the concept of “stealth violence” and its impact on college women. The first volume also included a paper addressing the impact of sexual victimization on academic performance among college women that I offered with Jessica Combs and Gregory Smith.

Volume 1 went on to place focus on how universities have responded to the victimization of college women. A paper by authors Chiara Sabina and Lavina Ho explored correlates of service utilization by victims of dating violence and sexual assault, and outlined reasons victims have for not seeking services. Attorney Nancy Chi Cantalupo brought together legal scholarship and case study research in a second paper to recommend provocative amendment to federal law or regulation to mandate that all higher education institutions survey their students approximately every five years about students’ experiences with sexual violence. Legal and disciplinary issues were also examined in a paper by scholar Mary Koss and student affairs professionals Jay Wilgus and Kaaren Williamsen that recommended a restorative justice university response to intimate forms of violence against women.

This second volume of the special issue now brings focus to the domains of risk, self-defense, and prevention. In the first of these papers, Antonia Abbey, Rhiana Wegner, Jacqueline Woerner, Sheri Pegram, and Jennifer Pierce offer a systematic review of empirical studies on the association between alcohol consumption and men’s sexual aggression. Their review identifies and reviews 25 cross-sectional surveys, six prospective studies, and 12 alcohol administration experiments published between 1993 and August 2013 with male college students and young adult (non-incarcerated) samples. The second paper in this section, authored by Catherine “Katie” Kaukinen, synthesizes the knowledge base on risk and protective factors for dating violence while highlighting its relevance to gender-based violence against college women. Kaukinen’s review highlights the limitations of the existing literature and knowledge base while

exploring a newer scholarship on health and behavioral risk factors that co-occur among college students experiencing dating violence. Heather Littleton and Martie Thompson each follow the Abbey et al. and Kaukinen papers with insightful commentaries. Littleton notes an important overlap in the two areas of study, including for example, that individuals in relationships where dating violence has occurred are more likely than students not in violent relationships to engage in other health risk behaviors including heavy alcohol use, substance use, and casual sex. Thompson summarizes common themes that emerge across the two papers and then highlights directions and implications for future research in the areas of co-occurrence, longitudinal designs, norms, and measurement.

The final grouping of papers in the second volume of the special issue discusses the use and effectiveness of self-defense and prevention models on college campuses. The first is offered by Tracey Kniffen, Charles Carlson, Antonio Ellzey, Tory Eisenlohr-Moul, Kelly Battle Beck, Renee McDonald, and Ernest Jouriles and introduces into the discussion of self-defense the use of a virtual experience to examine the influence of self-regulatory skills training on female participants' reactions to a high-risk encounter with an aggressive male. The results of the study included in their paper suggest that virtual reality platforms provide a realistic and challenging environment to examine how self-regulation procedures may influence behavioral outcomes. Chris Gidycz and Christina Dardis follow the virtual reality paper with their own review of research on feminist self-defense and risk reduction training programming for women. Their review discusses a rationale and key components for self-defense and risk reduction programming for women as well as extant barriers to the full implementation of these programs. They also offer a review of outcomes of self-defense and risk reduction programming and provide recommendations for future work in this area. A response to their paper is authored by

Walter DeKeseredy as he offers his own insights as an academic activist and urges further attention to contemporary pornography. The final main paper in the second volume provides a review of prevention programs related to violence against college women. That review, authored by Vicki Banyard, points out that most prevention work focuses exclusively on sexual violence; most evaluations concentrate on single programs on one campus; most meta-analyses focus on attitude outcomes; and most research explores main effects of program utility. She argues that it is time to formulate and evaluate more complex prevention models. The second volume closes with a discussant response offered to Banyard's paper by Tameka Gillum. Gillum's commentary emphasizes that the ecological model can inform the design and implementation of prevention efforts; and that it is critically important to engage college students in creating interventions that are culturally appropriate.

As with the first volume of this special issue, it is a pleasure for this guest editor to acknowledge the enormous aid given by many individuals whose leadership, inspiration, and commitment to the field helped make the special issue a meaningful contribution. My most significant thanks go to the authors of papers whose intellectual contributions are abundantly clear by the quality of their papers. The quality of the scientific meeting from which the special issue arose can also be credited in heavy part to the Center faculty, Charles Carlson, Ann Coker, Diane Follingstad, and Claire Renzetti who offered great leadership to its organizational and academic structure. That thanks is extended to Bonnie Fisher who, as always, gave meaningful advice to our effort. Further thanks also to the students, student affairs professionals, and advocates from both the community and campus settings who were part of the scientific meeting. Both their presence and their shared points of view were impactful. As with the first volume, thanks goes to anonymous peer reviewers helped shape all of our papers, and a final thanks goes

again to Editor Jon Conte who can always be counted on to use this journal as a means of offering an engaging platform for scholarly conversation.

While this special issue closes, the conversation about campus violence in all its gendered forms should not cease. In fact, it is time to stir again our sense of urgency about the need to reach a point where we fully understand the phenomena of violence against college women and are capable of preventing it. The academic careers of this and following generations of students, and indeed the lives of this and future generations, will not reach their full potential until we do.

ⁱ At the time of the June 2013 national scientific meeting and the preparation of this special issue, Carol E. Jordan served as Director of the Center for Research on Violence Against Women at the University of Kentucky.