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Women's Center newsletter, April 1986

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The Women's Center is for Everyone



EWU Women's Center
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NEWSLETTER

PROGRAMS

Thursday, April 3, 1986: SPRING RECEPTION, 3-5 p.m., Monroe 114

Our final reception of the year invites you to meet with old friends, talk with Women's Studies Faculty, or find out what Women's Programs at EWU has to offer. Refreshments will be served and everyone is invited to attend.

Tuesday, April 8, 1986: WOMANTREK: TREKING IN NEPAL, 12 Noon, PUB Multipurpose Room

From the heights of Machu Picchu to the white waters of the Grand Canyon, Bonnie Bordas has led women from the ages of 21 to 68 on travel adventures which include bicycling, hiking, rafting, and skiing. This slide presentation focuses on a month long trek in Nepal and demonstrates Womantrek's spirit of comradery, personal growth and good feelings that come from attaining a joint goal. Co-sponsored with Associated Students.

Wednesday, April 9, 1986: CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH IN FEMINIST ISSUES SERIES:
WOMEN AND POWER, 1 p.m. Monroe 114

The types of power behavior we are permitted to exercise are largely defined by our sex. In today's volatile world, scientists must review the study of power, possibly to redefine, certainly to demystify, so that the various forms of power are made accessible to both females and males. Joan Niemann, Applied Psychology, will present her research on this critical issue.

Thursday, April 10, 1986: "VOICES FROM THE WELL" 12 Noon, Monroe 114

Excerpted from a stage play, this video dramatically portrays extraordinary women from history, literature and the arts, women who have deeply influenced our culture and society from 18th century astronomer Carolene Herschel to contemporary artist Georgia O'Keeffe. "It gives a sense of power to those who watch!!"

Announcements

Rhythmic Aerobics, Inc: Exercise program - stretch, exercise, dance, weights - to music. Classes begin March 31 and meet Monday, Tuesday and Thursday at 4:15 p.m. at the Reed School Gym. Cost is \$25.00 for 10 weeks. Call Norma Smith, 359-2429, or the Women's Center, 359-2847 or 458-6327 for more information.

Book lovers: A number of books have disappeared from our library. Please take the time to sort through yours and return any which belong in our library so that others may have access to them also.

Women's Student Action Council invites women and men, students, staff, and professors with comments about misunderstood communications between the sexes to brainstorm suggestions for coping strategies. We will meet at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, April 2, 1986, in Monroe 114.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

In 1983, then Governor Spellman directed all state agencies to develop a policy statement defining sexual harassment and providing legal means, sanctions, and educational programs for dealing with it. EWU formed a committee composed of faculty, staff, students and administration in the fall of 1984 to meet the requirements of this directive. The 10 men and women of the committee worked for a year on the assignment, sifting and evaluating existing documents as models, to produce what they felt was a strong, fair, and equitable policy, grievance procedure, and educational brochure. The resulting documents were approved by the state Attorney General.

In this space we will publish the documents in future issues. For this one, let's look at some commonly held myths about sexual harassment.

Lee Swedberg, Chair
EWU Sexual Harassment Committee

MYTHS ABOUT SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Myth: Sexual harassment only affects a few women.

Fact: Several surveys have documented the widespread nature of sexual harassment. In one study, 88% of the respondents said they had experienced one or more forms of unwanted sexual advances on the job.

Myth: Sexual harassment is rare on the campus.

Fact: Women have only recently begun to talk about the long hidden problem of sexual harassment of students, staff and faculty. Fear of ridicule, and a sense of hopelessness about the problem and a feeling that it's a "personal" dilemma have kept the problem concealed.

Myth: Women should ignore sexual harassment when it occurs.

Fact: In one survey, 33% of those reporting sexual harassment tried to ignore the unwanted attentions. In 75% of these, the harassment continued or became worse. One quarter of the women who ignored the sexual propositions received unwarranted reprimands from their bosses or had their workloads increased.

Myth: If a woman really wants to discourage unwanted sexual attention, she can do so. If she's sexually harassed, she must have asked for it.

Fact: Many men believe a woman's "no" is really "yes," and therefore do not accept her refusal. Additionally, when a man is in a position of power, such as employer or teacher, the woman may be coerced or feel forced to submit.

Myth: Most charges of sexual harassment are false. Women use these charges as a way of "getting back" at a man with whom they are angry.

Fact: Women who openly charge harassment are often not believed, may be ridiculed, may lose their job, be given a bad grade or be mistreated in some other way. Women have little to gain from false charges.

Myth: Sexual harassment is not harassment at all. It is a purely personal matter between men and women. It's a fact of life.

Fact: When a woman is coerced by a professor or her employer, she is not always in a position to readily reject such overtures, or if she does, she may face adverse reactions. Several courts have ruled that sexual harassment on the job constitutes sex discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, and in some instances have awarded damages to women. Sexual harassment against students has constituted sex discrimination under Title IX of the Education Amendments. Regardless of the legal outcome, students face a chilling climate for learning if sexual harassment is permitted or indirectly condoned.

Reproduced from Sexual Harassment: A Hidden Issue, prepared by the Project on the Status and Education of Women, Association of American College.

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