**Introduction**

The recent deluge of press articles highlighting sexual misconduct and the famous people who have allegedly engaged in it demonstrates the systemic nature of this issue. Victims are feeling either more comfortable speaking up about their experiences or feeling their voice needs to be added to the conversation to stop inappropriate behavior. This has given rise to such movements as #metoo, which brings attentions to the prevalence of sexual misconduct. However, sexual harassment still suffers from being “the fodder of jokes, and the idea that it is a problem worthy of attention and sanctions is often dismissed” (Berdahl, 2007, p. 641). Statistics estimate that 40-75% of women and 13-31% of men have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace (Aggarwal and Gupta 2000). This illustrates the discrepancy between the importance that is placed on this issue and its occurrence rate.

Students are aware of these breaking cases which provides fodder for discussion regarding this topic in class. However, sexual harassment is not the easiest thing to discuss. It can engender feelings across the spectrum from disinterest to potentially serving as a trigger for students who have faced sexual harassment or misconduct themselves.

This discussion for this roundtable centers around three central questions: First, utilizing recent press articles to highlight the continuing problems with reporting and stopping sexual harassment in the workplace; second, establishing best practices for organizations to utilize; and third, establishing an atmosphere that allows students to disclose experience and attitudes with/about sexual misconduct in the workplace. Sexual harassment is discussed in several management classes, so the intended audience is anyone who teaches material that covers sexual harassment and wants to give the topic the attention and sensitivity that the material demands.

**Theoretical Foundation/Teaching Implications**

With examples of sexual harassment in the workplace saturating the media, sexual harassment has become a topical subject. The question for educators is how to use these case studies to highlight the prevalence and importance of sexual harassment. Currently, I have been assigning the news article about Harvey Weinstein printed in the New Yorker as an extra credit assignment. I chose that article, written by Ronan Farrow, because a) he broke this story, b) it gives detailed and multiple accounts of what women interacting with Harvey Weinstein faced and, c) because Ronan Farrow has given interviews saying his previous employer would not publish this article because they were afraid of legal reprisals. If a major media conglomerate is afraid of a team of high-powered lawyers, it becomes easy for students to see why people may be afraid to come forth and report, especially against people in positions of power.

The benefits of making this an activity that an entire class participates in requires a careful consideration of whether the benefits outweigh the costs. I preface this assignment with a trigger warning that the information contained in the article can be both graphic and disturbing and students have reported feeling intense, visceral reactions to the descriptions of sexual abuse and misconduct. Being a victim of sexual harassment is linked to a whole host of negative outcomes (e.g., Willness, Steel, and Lee, 2007), and people exposed to observing or hearing about sexual harassment may suffer similar outcomes as the actual victim (Miner-Rubino and Cortina 2007). Whether this can be an activity that has a broader audience for an entire classroom is a topic of concern.

Once the severity of the problem is establish, a question of how we get victims to report becomes pivotal. Victims of sexual harassment often engage in passive coping instead of directly addressing the problem by confronting the harasser or reporting the problem to a supervisor (Knapp, Faley, Ekeberg, & Dubois, 1997; U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 1995). Although it is outside the scope of this round table discussion to cover all best practices, the idea of observer intervention as a way to allow everyone in an organization to address sexual harassment occurrence in the workplace seems like a fruitful discussion topic. A typology of observer intervention (Bowes-Sperry and O’leary-Kelly, 2005) focuses on immediacy of intervention (taking action as an event is occurring vs taking later action to prevent further harassment) and level of involvement (private support vs public support). This could lead to the development of an activity where students can brainstorm different intervention strategies depending on the situation, options available, and boundary conditions, such as perceived welcomeness of intervention.

The last focus of the session is how to facilitate an environment where students can take part in an interactive and productive conversation centering about sexual harassment. Discussions regarding setting guidelines, objectives, and goals for sensitive topics, such as sexual harassment will be part of this round table. Best practices for trigger warnings and how and what should be delivered in these warnings is also a worthy topic.

**Session Description**

This round table will be 60 minutes evenly divided between the three content areas described above (using current examples to highlight the occurrence of sexual harassment, discussing best practices, such as observation intervention in the workplace, and creating a respectful environment to discuss sexual harassment in the classroom). Each section would take roughly 20 minutes. Questions to facilitate the first section would center around ways we can utilize the current media attention to make sexual harassment a relevant and topical issue. Do we treat these famous cases as case studies? Are these examples typical of the average experience of sexual harassment in the workplace? What are the similarities and differences we see emerging in these accounts of sexual harassment? Additionally, how do we highlight that men can also be the victims of sexual harassment in the workplace? The second topic will include prompts covering best practices. Particularly, is observation invention a fruitful avenue to introduce as an activity or discussion in the classroom? What would this look like? What are other best practices that need to be introduced into a classroom discussion? What kinds of interactive activities/discussion might be developed around these best practice areas?

Finally, the last topic will cover how to create an environment that is engaging and respectful. Questions will center around setting ground rules and giving trigger warnings. Additionally, a list of resources that should be available for students who do experience discomfort should be generated. The overall goal for this session is to not only have a lively conversation regarding this issue, but to generate potential activities and resources to help anyone addressing this issue feel prepared and ready to present this important topic with student participation and involvement.

**References**

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