As the North American Continent is engulfed in a celebratory mood at the wake of the new millennium, there are numerous genderized problems that continue to taint the relationship of women with their male counterparts in what can be seen as a continuum of mistrust and misogyny. This special issue of the Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology is dedicated to shedding light onto a particular problem in this continuum: gender harassment (GH) and sexual harassment (SH). The papers in this collection sometimes pursue conceptual aspects of this problem, sometimes look at methodological problems or theoretical voids, and sometimes provide new data and analyses. In its own way of inquiry, each paper paves the way for new awareness, knowledge and positive change.

Conceptualizations of Sexual Harassment

Although sexual harassment has a long history as a problem for women (Alcott [1874] cited in Weeks et al., 1986), it only recently acquired a label to make it visible. Moreover, only within the past few decades that it has been transformed from a mostly unexplored private ill to a public and social problem. Weeks and her colleagues (1986:432) trace the history of this transformation, first as an attempt to call the practice to public attention, then in labelling it as "sexual harassment," and finally in defining it as detrimental to work life. Eventually, US legislation linked SH to Civil Rights violations, elevating the issue to a social problem status since the early 1970s (Weeks et al., 1986).

Early feminist scholars who identified the problem saw SH as a means for men to subordinate women in the workplace and education (Backhouse and Cohen, 1978; 1981; Collins and Blodgett, 1981; Crull, 1982; Glass, 1988; Grahame, 1985; Kadar, 1982; MacKinnon, 1979; Schneider, 1985). Others see it as a form of sexual discrimination (Hemming, 1985, Landrine and Klonoff, 1997; Murrell, Olson and Friese, 1995). In 1978, The Canadian Human Rights Commission recognized SH to be a particular form of discrimination prohibitable under the Canadian
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Human Rights Act. In Canada, other early attempts included the Alliance Against Sexual Harassment (AASH) definition as:

... any unwanted sexually based or sexually oriented practice which creates discomfort and/or threatens a woman's personal well-being or functioning (mental, physical or emotional). Sexual harassment includes verbal abuse, jokes, leering, touching or any unnecessary contact, the display of pornographic material, the invasion of personal space, sexual assault and rape, or any threat of retaliation or actual retaliation for any of the above (cited in Kadar, 1982).

Grahame's (1985) comprehensive definition states:

persistent or abusive unwanted sexual attention made by a person who knows or ought reasonably to know that such attention is unwanted. Sexual harassment includes all sexually oriented practices and actions which may create a negative psychological or emotional environment for work, study, or the buying or selling of services. It may include an implicit or explicit promise of reward or compliance. Threats may take the form of actual reprisals or denial of opportunity for work, study, the purchase or sale of services (Grahame, 1985: 112)

In 1989, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled sexual harassment to be:

the gamut from overt gender based activity, such as coerced intercourse, to unsolicited physical contact, to persistent propositions, to more subtle conduct such as gender based insults and taunting, which may reasonably be perceived to create a negative psychological and emotional work environment" (Canadian Human Rights Annual Report, 1991:39).

The scope of the above definitions are wide enough to include all acts and pressures women(1) may experience, from those in managerial or supervisory positions or peers, to those who are under their supervision. However, most of the focus in the literature has been on conduct which is generated by men and directed towards women, but increasingly subsumes issues about sexual racism (Murrell, 1996).

Since the earlier attempts to define SH, new debates have added contours to the already multifaceted aspects of legal conceptualizations. In the US courts as well as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) efforts, a relatively clear differentiation has emerged between the quid pro quo SH (which subsumes the exchange of work-related benefits or consequences for sexual favours through bribery, threats or even physical force) versus the hostile work environment (which includes unwanted sexualized actions to alter, interfere with or effect one's work performance through creating a hostile and offensive work climate. (2) In terms of social research related to SH experiences, three broad categories of harassment have captured the attention of scholars. Gender harassment (GH) which involves generalized sexual or sexist comments or behaviour that insult, degrade or embarrass women; unwanted sexual attention which ranges from unwanted, inappropriate physical or sexual advances to outright assault or rape; and sexual
coercion which involves solicitation or coercion of sexual activity by promises of reward or threats of punishment (Fitzgerald and Hesson-McInnis, 1989). However, one must realize that in real life experiences, these categories may overlap. For example, sexual advances by a number of men may make the whole working environment hostile for women who may not be directly harassed, or coercive attempts of a harasser may also lead to sexual advances and sexual assault.

**Some Thoughts on Conceptualizations**

Of course, the *quid pro quo* type of SH is the easiest to identify, and although the frequencies are still rare, it is the most likely to be challenged. In terms of hostile work environment, many difficulties remain that blur the legal as well as theoretical conceptualizations. One of the problems is the issue of ascertaining the "unwantedness" of the behaviour in question, and upon whose shoulders the burden of proof falls. Clearly, the US courts seem to favour the position that it is the responsibility of the target to show that the harassing behaviour was unwelcome (Fitzgerald, Swan and Fischer, 1995; Paetzold and O'Leary-Kelly, 1996). This is quite unfortunate indeed: in no other criminalizable activity (except a few offences disproportionately inflicted on women such as rape) do we see the requirement from the injured party to prove that her victimization was against her will. Moreover, on this same aspect, sexual forms of harassment also diverge from racial harassment. The absurdity of asking the "unwanted nature" of racial harassment is considered a given, whereas the same principle does not seem to generalize to sexualized conduct. In the latter, consent, mutuality and non-injury are assumed unless the victim proves otherwise.

Another complicating factor lies in the perceptions and evaluations relating to the unwantedness since the perceptions of the perpetrator and the target are likely to be vastly different on the boundaries of acceptability (see Baker, Terpstra and Cutler, 1990; Fitzgerald and Ormerod, 1991; Jones, Remland and Brunner, 1987; Loredo, Reid and Deaux, 1995; Malovich and Stake, 1990; Popovich et al., 1995; Pryor and Day, 1988; Riger, 1991; Saal, 1996; Sev'er and Ungar, 1997 for findings of gender differences in perceptions, attributions or acceptability). By the same token, the definitions of "unwantedness" may also be clouded by the existing male dominance in the workings of the criminal justice system. Most perturbing of all, the attempt to establish "unwantedness" may open the floodgates for questioning and scrutinizing the behaviour of the victim herself such as what she may have said, what she may have done, worn, etc. Even simple personal choices such as clothing or make-up may be construed as inviting the harassing conduct or provoking the transgression (see Paetzol and O'Leary-Kelly, 1996, also see Herman, 1992 for similar generalizations to female victims of incest). In Canada, we recently witnessed a lower court decision of dismissal of a SH case, erroneously based upon the fact that the teenage victim "was not wearing a bonnet and crinolines" and was "not on her way to the nunnery" (Toronto Star, February 26, 1999, p. A1). Although this archaic decision was overturned by a unanimous decision of the Supreme Court of Canada (Toronto Star, February 26 1999, p. A7 and A20; March 4, 1999, A19), one cannot help but question the effects of less blatant but equally insidious biases of male police, lawyers and judges in similar cases.

US courts have found salvage on using the criteria of what would a "reasonable
person" see as unwanted in demarcating the level of "unwantedness" in SH cases. Even then, a generic expectation of reasonableness may not equally apply to women's and men's perceptions of SH. So far, the courts have been reluctant to replace the gender-blind "reasonable person" criterium with a victim sensitive "reasonable woman" counterpart (see Paetzold and O'Leary-Kelly, 1996 for detailed examples, and Loredo, Reid and Deaux, 1995; Murrell, 1996; Saal, 1996 and Stockdale, 1996 for more discussion).

Other ambiguities revolve around the expectation about economic and/or psychological losses due to the harassment experience. In the US, there is a Supreme Court precedence that establishes that the plaintiff is not required to show an economic loss, as long as she is able to establish a psychological detriment (see Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson (1986) as discussed by Paetzold and O'Leary-Kelly, 1996: 87-95). However, the American Psychological Association has argued against using psychological trauma as grounds for establishing SH claims (see Stockdale, 1996; Paetzold and O'Leary-Kelly, 1996). Therefore, most courts continue to use a two-prong litmus test where the complainants have to establish both an economic loss and some form of psychological suffering. This double-requirement was a clear set-back for Paula Jones in her SH charge against President William J. Clinton in 1998. Aside from the media frenzy about her appearance, past and current behaviour, motives, political affiliation with the ultra right, etc., the Achillea's foot in the dismissal of her formal complaint hinged on her inability to show an adverse work/economic loss outcome despite W.J. Clinton's "unwanted" behaviour and the psycho-social effects of the ensuing exposure. The case eventually led to a massive out-of-court settlement without admission of guilt (Toronto Star, December 19, 1998, A9). Legal experts argue that Jones could not have sued in Canada at all, since Canadian complainants have to bring their case to human rights commissions and only the latter can prosecute complainants. Moreover, even if the commission decides to pursue the matter, the compensations are capped at $10,000 (in Ontario) and are on the basis of tangible losses (see Howard Lewitt in Toronto Star, April 6, 1998, B3).

Incidence and Perseverence

As discussed above, there are still unresolved debates about what does or does not constitute SH. What is more clear is that SH is a pervasive, serious, and injurious form of violation of a person's right to a safe work or any other living environment. Moreover, SH is pervasive in many situations and can corrupt relations among tenants/landlords (Novac, 1990), professionals/clients (Shepard, 1971; Chiodo, Tolle and Labby, 1992), and seems to be rampant in the army (Toronto Star, May 20, 1998, p. A3 and June 18, p. A1; Globe and Mail, June 20, 1998, p. A12). Yet, the form that has received the most attention occurs in the workplace and educational institutions (Sumrall and Taylor, 1992). In a study of the US Merit System Protection Board (MSPB) files, 42% of women reported having been sexually harassed at work in the preceding 24 months (cited in Tangri, Burt and Johnson, 1982). In a follow-up study of MSPB files in 1988, virtually identical proportions were attained (cited in Stockdale, 1996). Yet, the findings about SH vastly differ from study to study based on sampling strategies used, and different population characteristics. For example, a 1981 Women in Trades study found that 92% of women felt that they were sexually harassed on the job (cited in Kadar,

One of the turning points in the problematization of SH as a social issue is Professor Anita Hill's charges of SH against Judge Clarence Thomas in the early 1990s. This event awakened North Americans to the widespread nature of SH. It also created a new urge to ferret out SH in places which one would expect to be beyond these things. University campuses are examples of the latter (Benson and Thomson, 1982; 1988; Dzeich and Weiner, 1990; Kenig and Ryan, 1986; Mazer and Percival, 1989; McDaniel and Roosmalen, 1991; Osborn, 1992; Powell, 1986; Pryor, 1987; Pryor and Day, 1988; Reilley, Lott and Galloghy, 1986). Sexual harassment at university settings seems to be less widespread than SH of working women in general. However, if an early study at Berkeley is any indication, it is not as rare as one might think. Benson and Thomson (1982:241) report that out of 111 non-transfer students, 31 reported SH by at least one male instructor. The same study found 24 of 158 transfer students reporting SH in their original universities for a total of 55 Berkeley women reporting close to 100 incidents. Osborn (1992) reports comparable numbers for Canadian Universities. More recent investigations suggest that as many as one out of two or three undergraduate and a slightly greater proportion of graduate female students may have experienced some form of unwanted or sexually inappropriate behaviour (see Popovich et al., 1986; Fitzgerald and Shullman, 1993; Schneider, 1987). Even female professors experience a variety of sexually harassing behaviours (Grauerholz, 1989; 1996; McKinney and Crittenden, 1992). Harassment of female faculty by male students is often referred to as countrapower harassment (see Benson, 1984). Grauerholz (1989:793) reports that 47.6% of female professors claim to have experienced a variety of sexually harassing behaviours from their male students. Of those, 60% reported more than one incident. In fact, Leonard et al., observed that less than 20% of faculty claimed to have never experienced any one or a variation of unwanted sexist comments, attention, physical touch or other types of sexual advances (Leonard et al., 1993).

Overall, the 1983 Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) survey estimated that 1.2 million Canadian women believed that they had been sexually harassed, at least once. Put slightly differently, 49% of the respondents reported at least one incident of unwanted sexual attention. Since the CHRC, there have been two large scale surveys conducted in Canada. One found that 61.4% of a nationally representative sample of over 1,200 women to claim that they were sexually harassed at work over the past year. A staggering 78.8% reported experiencing SH at work in their life-time (Smith, 1993; Gruber and Smith, 1995; Gruber, Smith and Kauppinen-Toropainen, 1996; also see Crocker and Kalemba and Welsh and Gruber in this issue). The Violence Against Women Survey (VAWS, 1993, also see Johnson, 1996) reported that 54% of the respondents claimed that they have experienced some form of unwanted sexual attention.

Some Thoughts on Incidence and Perseverence
Although the findings about the incidence of SH leave no doubt about its being a serious social problem, the wide variation in the reported proportions calls for caution in interpretation of the results. Some of the variation is related to the different definitions used in different studies, and/or as a result of the ambiguities in the definitions themselves, as summarized in the above section. However, most of the complicating problems are due to reporting as well as methodologies used in wording questions or drawing samples from a variety of populations.

Reporting of SH has been and remains to be problematic (see Fitzgerald, Swan and Fischer, 1995; Cleveland and McNamara, 1996; DeKeseredy and MacLeod, 1997; Fitzgerald and Shullman, 1993; Koss, 1990; Sev'er, 1996; Smith, 1994 for various conceptual and methodological aspects of this phenomenon). Like other genderized crimes (i.e., sexual assault, rape, intimate violence), SH is more likely to occur when the target is alone with the perpetrator(s) and thus, is hard to corroborate. Moreover, in highly genderized and sexualized societies such as our own, both the target and the perpetrator may be well aware of the gray area between genuinely friendly behaviour versus a predatory transgression, and the difficulty in proving when a boundary is violated. These ambiguities will likely hinder reporting, while at the same time serving as a "cover of innocence" for the violator even if the event is reported. In addition, norms of cooperation among colleagues as well as the hierarchical power positions where the perpetrator is likely to occupy a higher rung may conspire silence. Skewed sex ratios which marginalise women's work as well as women's troubles may act as additional barriers to reporting (see Dzeich and Weiner, 1990; Grauerholz 1996; Gutek, 1985; Kanter, 1977; Paludi, 1990). Many studies have found that the victims fear retaliation (Fitzgerald and Shullman, 1993; Koss, 1990).

Stockdale (1996) suggests that reporting will be positively correlated with offensiveness of the SH, and negatively correlated with perceptions of threat or perceived disadvantages to reporting (also see Brooks and Perot, 1991 and Gruber, 1989). In most cases, disadvantages for those who report far outweigh the advantages that may pursue (see Brooks and Perot, 1991; Cleveland and McNamara, 1996; Fitzgerald, Swan and Fisher, 1995; Hanisch, 1996 and the details in the following sections). Women from different racial backgrounds may experience more frequent and more severe forms of SH (Gruber and Bjorn, 1986), may feel more trapped within the sexual racism that surrounds them, may experience additional disadvantages than their white sisters if and when they do report, and may feel more torn between competing loyalties if their tormentor happens to be non-white (see Bart and O'Brien, 1984; Coles, 1986; Murrell, 1996). Problems with reporting SH may also be closely linked with the methodology of studies that seek this sensitive information. What types of questions are asked, how the questions and/or their preamble are worded, whether the questions are mutually exclusive and exhaustive, whether the survey seeks behavioural measures of SH or asks for attitudes, whether the respondents trust the interviewer, and the sex of the interviewer may all affect self reports. There is reason to believe that the accuracy of reporting can be substantially improved if differently worded questions on the same issue are asked more than once, if probes and follow-ups are used, and if the respondents are assured of their security and anonymity during and following the interviews (see DeKeseredy et al., and Crocker and Kalemba in this issue, also see Smith, 1987 and 1994).
Obviously, differential levels of reporting engendered by different methodologies are responsible for dissimilar findings.

Variations in the findings may also be due to other methodological issues related to sampling. Generally, studies on large, national, generalizable studies are few and far in between. In Canada, we are privileged by the existence of three large survey results that shed light on GH and SH (CHRC, 1983; Smith, 1993; Gruber and Smith, 1995; VAWS, 1993). In the US, the few that exist are already out of date (MSPB, 1981, 1988 as reported in Tangri, Burt and Johnson, 1982 and Stockdale, 1996). The prohibitive cost, time, energy and political will to conduct such massive studies make their frequent duplication impossible. Studies with smaller samples, even when carefully conducted, often lack comparability and almost always lack generalizability of their findings (see Welsh and Nierobisz, 1997 and Gillespie and Leffler, 1987 for a detailed discussion of methodological problems in SH studies). Methodological concerns also include recall of events, forward or backward telescoping, and the separation of perceptions and feelings from the facts of the case (Welsh and Nierobisz, 1997).

Another traditional blindspot in the literature has been the documentation of SH and its consequences in outside of work and school environments. In fact, we are only beginning to uncover the conundrum of SH in public places and its implications for the sense of security and general well-being of women (Gardner, 1995; Smith, 1993; VAWS, 1993, also see DeKeseredy et al.; Lenton et al. and Fleming and O'Reilly in this issue).

Correlates of Male Harassment of Women

A number of large survey studies on SH has tried to formulate typologies of male harassers and female victims (Tangri, Burt, Johnson, 1982; Gutek et al. 1980; Jensen and Gutek, 1982; Littler, Seidler-Feller and Opaluch, 1982). The harassers were found to be generally older than their targets, somewhat unattractive, married, and superior in education and occupational rung in relation to their targets. Targets were younger, and mostly unmarried women (Fain and Anderton, 1987; Gutek, 1985; Rivers, 1978, also see Lenton et al., in this issue).

Of course, there are also organizational correlates (see Ragins and Scandura, 1995). For example, the proportional representation of women in the workplace is a significant factor. Pioneer women in traditionally male dominated fields were vulnerable since they did not have support systems, since they were seen as challenging the status quo and thus deserving to be put into place, and since they represented "all" women (Kanter, 1977). The proportional representation may be particularly relevant to SH of professional women since in a vast majority of sectors, they are still under-represented and in Kanter's terminology, they are tokens. A token woman must display competence and prove herself to superiors, compete with peers and regulate those she supervises for a successful career. All of these require a refusal to fall into stereotypical role behaviour, and deem her as deviant in her career aspirations and deviant in sex role behaviour. As the social psychological literature clearly demonstrates, deviance conjures up attempts to control the deviant and SH is one of the many tools men use for control (Hemming, 1985; Kadar, 1982; Ragins and Scandura, 1995). A case in point may be female faculty in university settings (see Sev'er, 1995; 1996; Grauerholz, 1989; 1996;
Stockdale, 1996). Since they may be perceived as pioneers in traditionally male-dominated academe, they may act as lightning rods for men concerned about preserving their traditional privilege (Hemming, 1985). Female faculty may also attract free-floating hostility from their male peers who may hold disproportional power over other females in their lives (wives, daughters, students, etc.), and thus may be disinclined to share power with their female colleagues. In all of these dimensions, female academics may be targets of harassment not because they lack power, but precisely because they have power and prestige which is "incongruent" with their traditional gender status.

How race interacts with SH is not clear. Murrell (1996) argues that women of colour are more likely to be harassed, are likely to experience more severe forms of harassment, are less likely to report the harassment, and are less likely to be believed if they do so (also see Gruber and Bjorn, 1986). According to Murrell (1996), the preponderance of black women in hard pornographic images, the stereotypes of Latina women as hot-blooded love objects, and of Oriental women as submissive sexual pleasers may partially account for this correlation. Moreover, women of colour may feel a double jeopardy in relating to their male co-workers and supervisors, fearing either being sexually harassed or being perceived as a "slut" (Thomas, 1989, p. 282). This may suggest that career implications of SH as well as the fear of SH may be far more taxing for women of colour than for their white counterparts.

Some Thoughts on Correlates of Sexual Harassment

The existing research on SH is extremely North America centric. Although a few non-American explorations of SH exist (Brant and Too, 1994), there is almost no overlap between their coverage and the research citations that frequent the North American literature (see Paludi, 1994; Stockdale, 1996). With such a rift in the knowledge base, it is impossible to make valid comparisons between North American and non-North American experiences. A related complexity is due to the effects of globalization, and more specifically to the exportation of big business without an accompanying social and cultural sensitivity or conscience. Although valid and reliable data are lacking, the work-related experiences of women from traditionally patriarchal societies are likely to be very destructive in their consequences. (3)

Response Strategies to Sexual Harassment

In the existing literature, how women handle SH appears to be varied. Fitzgerald and her colleagues (1988) proposed a framework of response patterns which consists of 10 strategies. In the Fitzgerald model, what is emphasized is the responses that are internally focused (endurance, denial, etc.) versus those that are externally focused (avoidance, appeasement, etc., also see Fitzgerald, Swan and Fisher, 1995). Gruber (1989) has attempted to subsume reactions to harassment under four typologies: avoidance, defusion (sic), negotiation, and confrontation. There is considerable consistency in findings that the most common response to SH is doing nothing, and hoping it will go away. Unfortunately, SH rarely goes away without some form of intervention (Gutek, 1996). Fitzgerald, Swan and Fischer (1995) interpret this lack of reaction as a psychological/cognitive...
strategy to deal with the impact of SH. According to their reasoning, doing nothing may allow women to ignore, deny or endure what is happening to them, and thus may constitute an attempt to minimize its impact on their lives. Such a strategy may also be associated with an attempt to maintain the belief in a just-world, such as bad things do not happen to good people, and since I am a good person, this cannot be happening to me (Stockdale, 1996). Of course doing nothing may also be a "rational" choice for victims who realize the negative consequences of reporting. Consequences can range from being the target of jokes, ridicule, to personal threats or being fired (Cleveland and McNamara, 1996; Fitzgerald, Swan and Fischer, 1995; Coles, 1986; Thacker, 1996, also see Welsh and Gruber in this issue).

Defusion represents a slightly more active attempt to deal with the situation than avoidance. Defusive attempts include going along, being a good sport, making a joke of it, all of which attempt to restore a working equilibrium without reverting to conflict or confrontation. However, defusive attempts may indeed work against the victim if she finds herself in the position to prove the unwanted nature of the sexually harassing conduct (see the earlier discussion on the burden of proof in showing "unwantedness").

Gruber's (1989) third and fourth typologies, negotiation and confrontation, are more active/assertive attempts to find a solution. Both involve pointing out to the harasser the objectionable nature of his behaviour. The difference is in the level of assertiveness, and in the willingness to pursue the matter further in more public realms or in the willingness to seek litigation if all fails. In sum, negotiation may be "asking" the harasser to stop, whereas confrontation may be "telling" him to do so. Nevertheless, the perils women face in proclaiming a safe environment for themselves are many, and some women may see the process as detrimental to their well-being as the harassment itself (Cleveland and McNamara, 1996; Fitzgerald, Swan and Fischer, 1995).

As common sense will dictate and as the accumulating knowledge in the area supports, the more vulnerable the woman is, the more likely that she will choose a passive strategy, which may include no response at all. Vulnerability could be a woman's age (too young), race (non-white), experience (unexperienced), qualifications (low in formal education), need (dependence on the particular job), and alternatives (transferability of skills and access to other forms of income). Type of response may be based upon whether or not the victim thinks she will be believed (Jensen and Gutek, 1982; Koss, 1990) which will also depend on the perceived position of the institution on such issues. Additional determining factors may be whether the work environment is sexualized, the availability of SH policies, procedures and support systems, and the organizational stance on equity matters (Gutek, 1996; Hulin, Fitzgerald and Drasgow, 1996).

Some Thoughts on Response Strategies

One of the problematic aspects in evaluating the response strategies relates to the differential emphasis on micro versus macro level factors. Social-psychological literature is more inclined to emphasize the target or the perpetrator characteristics, the perceived level of offensiveness of the act and/or the interpersonal nature of interaction among the parties involved (supervisor/
supervised, etc.) in an attempt to understand why individuals respond in a certain way or fail to respond in other ways (Brooks and Perot, 1991; Gruber, 1989). More macro level analyses focus on the institutional and structural factors that may elicit or even force certain patterns of responding and hinder other forms (Hulin, Fitzgerald and Drasgow, 1996; Kanter, 1977). Although both approaches are very useful and necessary, probably an in-depth understanding of response patterns requires more integrated approaches that take into consideration the complexity of micro and macro forces that affect outcomes (see Rowe, 1996 and Fitzgerald, Swan and Fischer, 1995). However, too much emphasis on individual characteristics in individual situations may inadvertently cloud the fact that SH is a social and structural ill that is interlinked with other manifestations of male dominance (Cleveland and McNamara, 1996; Sev'er, 1996). In our research and theories, how social scholars balance the quest for individual level variables within structural inequalities and constraints is crucial. How gender, class and race interact, and what that means for poor women or women of colour should also be made a central inquiry (Murrell, 1996).

There are problems with treating SH as an isolated entity. For example, seeking individualized or micro context bound causes gleans over a continuum of violence against women (see Cleveland and McNamara, 1996; NiCarthy, Gottlieb and Coffman, 1993; Pagelow, 1984; Sev'er, 1999). It may be more constructive to build theories that locate SH within a patriarchal and oppressive system. In the latter view, more concerted efforts to equalize the balance of power at the structural as well as the personal realm may be an absolute must before women can attain a safe environment of work or leisure.

**Effects of Gender Harassment and Sexual Harassment**

The documented effects of sexual harassment are varied. In general, the literature shows that SH blocks a woman's opportunities by chilling her environment, threatening her personhood, and reducing her to a sexualized object. It may also be difficult to dissect and apportion the effect of a single harassing situation, since targets of harassment report being subjected to various kinds, and even by various people (see DeKeseredy et al., and Crocker and Kalemba in this issue).

Gutek and Koss (1993) suggest that the various effects of SH can be categorized under somatic, psychological and work related outcomes (also see Gutek, 1982). Although some victims report no long-term effects, most victims of SH are found to suppress inner feelings, experience feelings of guilt or shame, are fearful, take time off work, ask for transfers, and even leave work (Cleveland and McNamara, 1996; Koss, 1990; Pryor and Day, 1988; Hanisch, 1996). This list clearly implies a sociopsychological toll on human lives, as well as a material cost for the workplace.

Doug Baldwin, senior vice-president of Imperial Oil estimates SH costs to his company to be close to $8 million a year in absenteeism, employee turnover and lost productivity (quoted in Canadian Human Rights Annual Report, 1992:47). This figure pales in contrast to some US estimates. In 1981, according to the MSPB survey of over 23,000 respondents, the cost of SH for federal employees alone was estimated to be $188.7 million (cited in Knapp and Kustis, 1996: 201). After considering the factors such as productivity reduction, incident costs, absenteeism,
legal/medical costs, as well as separation/replacement and transfer costs, Knapp and Kustis (1996: 208) estimated annual SH costs to the US army to be $533 million. In case the magnitude of this estimate escapes attention, the authors note that the army could have purchased 78 Black Hawk helicopters or 888 Army Tactile Missile systems for the same amount (p. 209).

On the personal front, psychological effects of SH may include depression, tension and irritation. It is argued that targets manifest symptoms like those suffered by post-trauma victims. Originally, the term "posttraumatic stress disorder" was coined by Goodman et al. (1993) to denote the extreme shame, self-blame and helplessness that victims of violence suffer much like the victims of other traumatic events. Gutek and Koss (1993) have described reactions of SH victims as remarkably similar to victims of posttraumatic stress. Not surprisingly, a vast percentage of individuals who have experienced SH report a decrease in their emotional well-being (Crull, 1982; Hanisch, 1996: 181). Severe reactions such as sleeplessness, substance abuse, physical or mental health problems, and difficulties in interpersonal relationship are also common (Crull, 1982; Hadjifotiou, 1983; Pryor and Day, 1988; Vaux, 1993). The objectification the victims feel may be a life-time blow to their self-image and self-confidence (Pryor and Day, 1988).

**Some Thoughts on Effects of Sexual Harassment**

The literature suggests the difficulty of measurement of either the personal or the organizational or social costs of harassment. Although they are absolutely essential, neither the development of sophisticated measuring tools (Smith, 1993; Smith, 1994; VAWS, 1993; Gutek and Koss, 1993; Koss, 1990) nor the complicated mathematical calculations (Knapp and Kustis, 1996) can accurately reflect the real toll on personal lives, the short or long term career choice and implications or the cultural loss in human capital. Some theorists see SH as a continuation of emotional abuse women face, including insults, intimidation and excessive or illegitimate acts of control which happen in work and non-work situations alike (Nicarthy, Gottlieb and Coffman, 1993, also see SeVer, 1999). If one considers such a continuum of abuse, the effects may indeed be cumulative and exponential rather than transient and linear. Indeed, social scientists should be concerned about the accumulated impact of violence in women's lives, and what this means for a society in general, for women as individuals, for their loved ones and for the children they are likely to raise (Pagelow, 1984). What does it mean for a woman to be sexually or physically molested as a child, abused as a wife, lover or a date, harassed as a worker, stalked by a stranger or an ex-partner or insulted as an innocent passer bye in a public place? The other side of the same coin is the effects of witnessing harassment, even if the person is neither the immediate target nor the perpetrator of the current act. What are the implications of chilly climates due to SH in setting future thresholds of tolerance for gendered relations? What are the social implications of allowing sexual harassers to get away with what they have done? If role modelling theories of SH are correct (see Popovich and Licata, 1987), the future of gender relations may be seriously disserviced by the predatory behaviour of men in leadership positions such as President Clinton and Judge Clarence Thomas.

**Theories of Sexual Harassment**

The early attempts to conceptualize SH in the 1970s were cognizant of the role of power
differentials in such interactions. Not surprisingly, some of the most developed theoretical models of harassment are still construed around this core concept. Dictionary definitions of power include concepts like "ability to act," "physical strength and force," and "control, influence, and authority." Key social psychological definitions also reiterate these aspects, but add the capacity to affect the quality of another person's outcome (Thibaut and Kelley, 1959). In general, three central considerations are relevant to people's evaluation of power: its source, the manner in which it is employed, and its effects (Lips, 1991). These are extremely important concepts since they allude to "persons" as holders of power, to their idiosyncratic ways of exercising or abusing it, and to outcomes of this transaction on a one-to-one basis. However, what goes well beyond these individualized conceptualizations is the "institutionalization of power" where norms, rules, and sanctions deify some and silence others. There is a dimension of power which gives the powerful the control over scarce resources, and the ability to punish the powerless through threats of depriving them from access to resources (Sherif, 1982). Thus, the social psychological definitions signify that power is not a commodity, not something one has or doesn't have, but a dynamic emerging from the interaction of unequals in social situations that allow such inequality. Power is a process, through which the powerful can subjugate the powerless, without having to fear much resistance or repercussions. As Grahame (1985: 121) summarizes "[p]ower is in part the ability to subvert another person's will to one's own. To exercise such power is to do violence to that other person."

A. The organizational-power model of sexual harassment:

The organizational-power model argues that institutions have vertical power structures which contribute to SH (Fain and Anderton, 1987; Tangri, Burt and Johnson, 1982). According to this model, women are much more likely to be harassed simply because they occupy the lower rungs in the vertical power structure of the organizations. The model also predicts that men can also be harassed (by women or by other men) if they are low in the power hierarchy. In that sense, it is not gender, but occupational standing that makes them targets. The remedies that can be drawn from such a conceptualization are two pronged: in one sense, if people do well, climb on the hierarchy of power in their respective work situations, whether they are women/black/gay, etc., they will eventually assure a position that will protect them from workplace transgressions. A more cynical interpretation of the organizational model is that since hierarchical power structures of work environments are not likely to be altered in any substantial way, there will always be those in the lower rungs who will become targets, and there will always be those who will ignore or trivialize the injustices (see Sev'er, 1996; 1999). Moreover, what the organizational model ignores is the fact that hierarchical power often interlocks with structural constraints such as class/race/gender and individual efforts are not enough or capable of neutralizing such constraints.

B. The patriarchal-power models of sexual harassment:

Although there are numerous variations of patriarchal models, the common denominator is that these models see SH as a manifestation of the power imbalances between men and women. Not only men rule, but they also take measures to legitimize their rule (Farley, 1978; Gardner, 1989; MacKinnon, 1979). It should be noted that the patriarchal-power models, like the organizational one, see the cause of harassment in power imbalances.
However, the former also emphasize the propensity of men to have more access to resources (economic such as wealth or income, occupational and educational, political, legal and if all fails, physical power) and women's relative dependence and subordination to men on such dimensions. Even if every man is not personally privileged, established and sustained norms and values, rules and laws that legitimize male dominance will still protect and privilege him in some ways. The patriarchal-power models subsume an entrenched dimension of power that the organizational model underemphasizes. Thus, the problem is seen as much larger than the isolated cases of abuse. All those who prefer to trivialize the abuse, those who ignore it, those who see it as unavoidable, and of course those who see it as provoked and deserved are seen as part of the same problem. Traditional response patterns are seen to further victimize the victim by questioning her motives and behaviours rather than those of her male perpetrator(s). These institutionalized power structures, as seen in Clarence Thomas's senate hearings in the 1990s, do everything possible to preserve the status quo from blame and responsibility, and make social change slow and painful. An outcome of the sum total of these processes is women's recognition of the odds against them. Women lead more fearful lives even when they are not directly victimized, seek fewer opportunities and are reluctant to openly challenge the status quo which subjugates them (Bart and O'Brien, 1984, Cleveland and McNamara, 1996; Fitzgerald, 1993; Martin, 1984; Stanko, 1990). Thus, unlike the organizational model, the patriarchal-power models presuppose that all men are potential harassers, all men benefit from other men's controlling efforts regardless of the rungs they occupy in the hierarchy and most who exploit their power still get away with it since the normative and sociolegal aspects are also male biased (Backhouse and Cohen, 1978; Farley, 1978; MacKinnon, 1979).

C. Role theories of sexual harassment:

There are also more social-psychological theories of SH that emphasize learning and enactment of genderized roles. Probably one of the best known is the sex role spillover that emphasizes the transference of gender roles from family and interpersonal types of relations to work settings (Gutek and Morash, 1982; Gutek, Cohen and Conrad, 1990). The spillover consists of stereotypical expectations about women (as either nurturers/mother-figures or sexual/erotic possessions) to inappropriately generalize into work settings. However, the sex role spillover is not necessarily automatic, it is either amplified or suppressed by the type of contact. In gender imbalanced situations (either predominantly male or female), in traditionally female or male occupations (nursing, teaching versus engineering, construction), and in highly sexualized work environments (modelling, waitressing, airline hostessing, etc., see Littler, Seidler-Feller and Opaluch, 1982 for an example) the role spillover will act as a fertile ground for increased propensity for harassment.

D. Gender-based Attribution Theories of Sexual Harassment:

Gender-based attribution models very eloquently address why women and men may see and interpret sexually harassing events differently (see Cleveland and Kerst, 1993; Jensen and Gutek, 1982 and the review of gender differences in SH discussed above). Gender-based attributions can also be utilized in understanding or explaining the responses of male and female students to surveys using SH scripts (Jones and Remland, 1992; Kenig and Ryan, 1986; Loredo, Reid and Deaux, 1995; Popovich et al. 1995; Sev'er and Ungar, 1997; Valentine-French and Radtke, 1989). Moreover, attribution theories can be
effectively utilized in making sense of men's proclivities to blame women and women's tendency to blame themselves in interpreting even unquestionably unwanted behaviour. However, because of their micro level emphasis, attribution theories of SH are mute on structural constraints and/or the continuum of violence within which SH acts as an additional tool of control.

Some Thoughts on Theoretical Models

One of the major shortcomings of SH theories in general is their tendency to address sexual harassment as an "isolated" genderized phenomenon. Although SH is indeed a social problem which deserves to be understood, explained and changed in its own right, it is also a piece of a gargantuan puzzle in the subjugation of women and violence against women continuum (see Sev'er, 1999; Cleveland and McNamara, 1996; Landrine and Klonoff, 1997; Pagelow, 1984). In that sense, theories which look at factors such as intra or interpersonal characteristics, perceptions and attributions or even the nature of organizational structures are likely to miss some of the complexities that feed and sustain these patterns. Personalized power based theories that seek the solution to SH in training women to combat these intrusions on their own (i.e., through assertiveness training, or personalized guides, etc., see Hughes and Sandler, 1986) also overlook the social and cultural constraints that undermine singular efforts (Fitzgerald, Swan and Fischer, 1995). Patriarchal power theories of SH are partially immune to this criticism due to their emphasis on layers of genderized power differentials at the personal, social, legal, political and economic realms, and their insistence that change can occur only if inequalities in all realms are simultaneously addressed. However, it can be argued that they too truncate their efforts by not adequately exploring the triangulation among gender, race and class (Murrell, 1996; Kramarae, 1996).

Another major weakness of SH models lies in their focus on workplace harassment, with little attention to the continuum of harassment. Although there is an increasing amount of research in public forms of SH (see Gardner, 1995), theoretical models which address such complexities are still in their infancy. If this special issue can serve as a vector of collective efforts on SH, a point of emphasis has to be the development of new or substantial expansions of the existing theoretical frameworks. It is my contention that the SH area requires a theory of social responsibility which subsumes layers of causation. Such a model can benefit from existing theories both within and outside of the SH area.

Implications, Conclusions and this Collection

Like most genderized social problems, SH is a difficult topic to address. As I have tried to show in this review, there are numerous ambiguities in the conceptualizations and many remaining debates about the incidence. Different methodologies each with their own strength as well as weakness, sometimes help us untangle some of these complexities, but often lead to additional debates and confusions. The theoretical developments in this area are very interesting in and of themselves, but not sufficient to address the complex web of interpersonal, social and structural factors that make SH a part of the continuum of violence against women. As social scholars, we are often overwhelmed by the interconnectedness
among race, class and gender, and how this interconnectedness complicates SH. We are newly beginning to shift the lens of our social inquiry on SH in public settings. Likewise, we are only beginning to question the effects of globalization on women workers in traditionally patriarchal societies. The latter may be more open to global capitalism than to any form of gender balance. In this long list of debates, I have not even raised the role of social scientific inquiry and teaching which itself is clearly genderized (see Bart, 1971; Heald, 1989; Lewis and Simon, 1986; Pagano, 1990; Paludi, 1990; Sev'er, 1995; 1996; Smith, 1990). Ironically, although investigations of SH are frequent in gender-based or business journals, the track record of the mainstream social science journals on issues like SH leaves much to be desired. Social structural ills demand mainstream attention precisely because they affect the perceptions, expectations of all men and women towards one another, and destroy the fragile trust among many (Sev'er, 1996). For these reasons, this special exposure of SH in the current issue of the CRSA is a much needed step in the right direction.

In this special issue, DeKeseredy et al., Lenton et al., and Fleming and O'Reilly look at different forms of sexualized transgressions in public places rather than the traditionally emphasized work and educational settings. DeKeseredy et al. bring new data and new insights into genderized as well as sexualized transgressions in public housing. Their interest is on the often undetected crimogenic behaviour in concentrated, socially disadvantaged inner-city neighbourhoods occupied by the less fortunate segments of the society. Using a revised version of the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS-2, see Straus et al., 1996), the authors carefully demonstrate how gender and class complicate the personal as well as more public lives of women in six public housing estates of the Ottawa-Carleton region. Although DeKeseredy et al. do not break-down their results on the basis of race/ethnic composition of the victims or their harassers, the descriptive information they provide indicates that ethnic and cultural patterns may indeed be embedded in the complexity of gender relations in these culturally heterogenous pockets of disadvantage. Women's higher vulnerability to become the targets of crime is both due to their intimates' transgressions against them, and because of the male-peer dominated, macho cultures of men who occupy the same environments of despair.

Methodologically, DeKeseredy et al.'s study adds to our understanding of the issues of underreporting of genderized crimes against women, and show possible ways of reducing this tendency. Conceptually, DeKeseredy et al.'s study introduces the possibility of testing class based theories of crime as well as theories of male-peer cultures in understanding genderized violence and harassment in public places. Empirically, DeKeseredy et al. show how widespread harassing behaviours are, above and beyond the kinds that are routinely studied at work or educational settings. Although the authors do suggest caution, DeKeseredy et al.'s findings also raise some disquieting issues about the possible link between social disadvantage and propensity for crimes against persons. Making sure that the socioeconomically disadvantaged do not get unduly scapegoated for yet another social ill, this link surely demands careful future investigations.

Lenton et al. (this issue) also explore the experiences of women in public places. The authors provide an excellent review of the theoretical arguments on SH, including social psychological views dating back to Goffman (1963). Many variations of feminist positions on SH are carefully reviewed. Moreover, using
findings from an impressive survey of 1,990 Canadian women, Lenton et al. provide new insights about the prevalence of SH in streets, transit systems, and shopping malls. They provide a window into the severity of harassment women experience, and the characteristics of women who are most likely to be targeted. These are important, insightful and often new additions to our knowledge-base. Given the fact that our knowledge about SH in public places is in its infancy, the careful analysis of Lenton et al. go a long way in terms of expanding our conceptual frame. Given the political will of a progressive government (not to be confused with a progressive conservative government elected for a second term in Ontario, Toronto Star, June 4, 1999, p. 1), their work can also be used to shape public policy on safety of women. If there is one point of caution about these findings at all, it will have to be the detailed focus on the characteristics of the victims. Despite numerous statistically significant correlations among variables, there is the danger of distracting from the fact that SH is about men's unacceptable and reprehensible behaviour which can and often do target all kinds of women. The need to focus on men's behaviour is becoming quite common in other gender-based crime studies such as rape, date rape and intimate partner abuse of women. Insights from that body of literature can help to refocus the sociological lens on the perpetrators of SH, their behaviour and on the male biases that protect the status quo.

Using the same SH survey data that Lenton et al. use, Crocker and Kalemba (in this issue) pursue SH within its much better known and understood arena: the work place. What is enlightening in this survey is the range of methodological safeguards utilized to extract as much information from as large a sample as possible (also see Smith, 1994). For example, there were at least 12 attempts to reach each and every telephone number that was randomly selected, and calling back only those who refused participation before they knew about the focus of the survey, but not those who refused after getting this crucial information. This methodological care in sampling and sensitivity towards the respondents increase the validity and generalizability of the survey findings. They also raise the methodological bar for other survey studies on SH or similar emotionally laden topics.

A striking finding is that when women who report SH in the past year and those who report it ever taking place in their work lives are taken together, the overall rate of SH is 78%. Moreover, the data also reveal that these are not necessarily very mild forms of inconvenience on women's work lives, as some may erroneously think. The number of women who report threats, coercion and physical force is quite high (10% over all working life). What is also telling in these results is that the women were upset as a result of the SH experience, regardless of the form it took or the frequency of its occurrence. These findings again show that there is nothing to be taken lightly about SH of any kind. Although the authors remain within a descriptive orientation, the strength of the methodology as well as the strength of the findings will make these data a prime building block for future conceptualizations.

Fleming and O'Reilh paper (in this issue) is also about a type which is not traditionally and routinely included in studies of SH. Fleming et al. pursue the issues related to criminal harassment of women in the form of stalking, which is almost always a terrifying, potentially violent and sometimes even deadly form of
criminal offence. After providing examples of stalking which has drawn extensive media attention, Fleming and O'Reilly continue their discussion by comparing and contrasting legislation in Canada and the US. The authors gratefully acknowledge the recent incorporation of criminal harassment into the Criminal Code of Canada in 1993. Nevertheless, they also emphasize: first, the "Herculean efforts" by women's groups to initiate this inclusion, second, a stalking related death to engender the required legalistic response to needs of women in the basically patriarchal legal system. The authors then direct their criticism on the remaining loopholes of the newly introduced legislation. What we see in their discussion is the resurrection of the "reasonableness" argument that I already summarized above in conjunction to the legal responses to other forms of harassment. In Fleming and O'Reilley's analysis, we again see the possible and demonstrated impact of deep rooted perceptions, attitudes and judgments. It is no wonder that the overall feelings of safety may be profoundly different for men and women, for victims and perpetrators, and for people who use the criminal justice system and those who deliver it. The authors highlight the urgent need for untangling the insidious gender differentiations, biased expectations about the burden of proof process and the reasonableness criteria. Fleming and O'Reilley also draw our attention to the inconsistency in dealing with stalking offences. Unless the entrenched patriarchal biases in the workings of the justice system is addressed, and specific training of the front line police officers on these matters is provided, section 264 of the Canadian Criminal Code is likely to remain as an ineffective scare-crow against the vulturous attacks by already active or would be stalkers.

Welsh and Gruber (in this issue) look at the conditions that influence reporting of SH. Using two sets of data, they statistically differentiate those who use internal sources and mechanisms from those who utilize external systems for their complaints. Their findings challenge some of the traditional findings in the literature, while supporting others. As an example to the former, Welsh and Gruber report that the individual characteristics of women which may deem her as vulnerable did not play a role in determining the type of reporting (see the earlier review for different findings on the vulnerability issue, also see the earlier discussion on the dangers of focusing too much on victim characteristics). As an example to the latter, Welsh and Gruber report the significant correlations between reporting and the severity of harassment, multiple harassment and harassment that involves supervisors. An alarming aspect of these results is that some work environments are infested with SH, and there is a possibility that women themselves suffer by losing or having to leave their jobs when they complain. Indeed, the majority of women who have filed complaints have left (or been indirectly or covertly forced to leave) their jobs where the SH has occurred. These findings are again supportive of the earlier findings that indicate perils for women who break the circle of silence on SH and yet again echo the need for social-structural interventions that tip the balance away from the offenders.

One of the many interesting aspects of Welsh and Gruber's findings is the increased likelihood of women to report SH when there are multiple harassers. The authors' interpretation of this finding is through the possibility that there may be witnesses in such cases, and thus there may be the possibility of corroborating the offensive conduct. It may also be that the cognitive attempts to ignore or minimize the harassment will not work when others have also seen the harassment. Although Welsh and Gruber's discussion of the negative effects are
exclusively for the complainants, one must also wonder about the indirect impact these severe outcomes may have on other workers. Males may learn that not much will happen to them while women may learn to keep quiet even if they are transgressed.

References


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responses to sexual harassment." Sex Roles, Vol. 27, pp. 3-4.


NOTES:

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<th>Table 1. A SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY MODEL OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT</th>
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<td><strong>STRUCTURAL CORRELATES</strong></td>
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<td>Male Dominance in:</td>
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| • Religious beliefs/teachings  
• Political/legal institutions  
• Economic life/opportunities  
• Educational institutions  
• Family law and practice  
• Criminal law and practice | • Norms/values  
• General social practices, rituals  
• Socialization | • Hierarchical power  
• Skewed sex-ratios  
• Equity in pay/hiring/promotions  
• Gender-typing of work  
• Sexualized work environments | • Age, race, class, marital status  
• Vulnerability (i.e., youth, beauty)  
• Interaction style (i.e., submissive, introverted, etc.) |
| Race/Class/Gender Triangulation: | Gendered Responses To: | Availability of: | Offender Characteristics: |
| • Rigid social stratification  
• Different forms of genderized violence  
• Sexual racism  
• Homophobia | • Male aggression (i.e., sports)  
• Male transgressions (i.e., the media)  
• Criminal justice (i.e., police) | • Legitimized support systems (i.e., Human Rights; Women's Rights bodies at the community level)  
• Legal recourse | • Age, race, class  
• Personal, genderized power  
• Patriarchal beliefs/values  
• Male peer group support |
| Availability of: | | | Relationship Characteristics: |
| • Hate Laws  
• Human Rights, Women's Rights and Anti-racism Legislation | | | • Unequal  
• Sexualized/genderized  
• Hidden from scrutiny  
• Inter or intra-racial/ethnic |
| | | Availability of: | |
| | | • Personal support networks  
• Mediation | |
## Existing Theories:

### General Conflict
- Marxist/Socialist/Radical Feminist Theories
- Patriarchal Power Theory

### General Learning
- Sex-Role Spill-Over
- Gender Socialization
- Moral Development
- Status Attainment
- Differential Association
- Cultures of Violence
- Male Peer Support
- Routine Activities

### Organizational
- Power
- Organizational Socialization
- Social Exchange
- Equity Theories
- Social Systems
- Resource Theory

### Cognitive Development
- Attribution Theory
- Impression Management
- Sexual Arousal (sexualized power)
- Socio-Biology
- Psychoanalytic

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1. It should be noted that these definitions are abstract enough to cover SH of men (and harassment of people from other designated categories, i.e., race). However, in a vast number of recorded cases, the targets of harassment are women while the perpetrators are men. Therefore, in this review, I am going to use SH to refer to the instances where women are victimized by men, unless I state otherwise.


3. Recently, a story in the Toronto Star (May 23, 1999, B1-B5) featured the extreme forms of sexist treatment, SH and rape of many female workers in a small, border town in Mexico. It is alleged that since 1993, 187 female workers have been murdered, most of them after being gang-raped by some of their co-workers. The town (Ciudad Juarez) is created to serve numerous multinational corporations that seek cheap labour. Young people from all over Mexico have been flocking into town, in pursuit of jobs despite deplorable working and living conditions. The Mexican Human Rights Commission is quoted as saying Juarez officials have shown 'sexist contempt for the lives of women' to the point that 'what's happening is not even considered to be exceptional' (p. B5).
