The #MeToo Movement has highlighted how pervasive sexual harassment is in society. In recent months, there have been numerous stories in the media of men in powerful positions who have been exposed for their harassment of women, often over a long period of time. The workplace is a microcosm of society but what part does power dynamics play in creating a culture where sexual harassment is tolerated?

The impact of power on an individual has a profound effect from a psychological viewpoint, remarks Professor Ben Voyer, professor of creativity marketing at ESCP Europe.

The literature is psychology is rather extensive and suggests that power has consequences in terms of three important aspects of our psychological functioning: how we process information; how we experience emotions and as a consequence how we behave. Powerful individuals are more capable of concentrating on important information and get less distracted by peripheral information.

Power also affects our capacity to take the perspective of others and empathize, remarks Voyer. This is something crucial in understanding sexual harassment as perpetrators may be less capable of understanding the emotions of their victims. Power-holders exert different types of behaviors. Powerful individuals are more likely to be action-focused and make first moves.

Research also shows that power can act as a trigger for men and women who are high in tendency to sexually harass, adds Voyer. “This means that power is not a definite trigger for every man but will definitely play a role for those with a predisposition.”

The larger issue of sexual harassment is a clear disparity of power at the top of an organization, argues Allyson Zimmermann, executive director for Catalyst Europe. “When you see that there is a disparity of power in an organization, you see sexual harassment increase and when you see power shared across gender, you see harassment decreasing.”

There is also the danger of the “superstar” harasser. Employers may find themselves in a position where the harasser is a workplace “superstar.” By superstar, think of the high-earning trader at an investment bank or the law firm partner who brings in lucrative clients. A select task force on the study of harassment in the workplace commissioned by the US Employment Equal Opportunities Commission outlined how psychologists have detailed how power can make an individual feel uninhibited and thus more likely to engage in inappropriate behaviors. In short, “superstar” status can be a breeding ground for harassment.

Zimmermann is keen to point out that having women in leadership positions alone doesn’t block bad behavior in the workplace. “But it does reflect an environment that women can be viewed as colleagues, not prey. This is about looking beyond how women are being viewed not only in corporations but in society as a whole.”

Zimmermann believes there is a danger in the aftermath of the #MeToo Movement of a “chilling” effect where senior men might be afraid to sponsor or mentor women in organizations.

It’s anecdotal but it’s being discussed within companies and we tell organizations to challenge this. While men hold a lot of the power in organizations, one of the ways that women advance is women having access to power and having sponsors to give them mission-critical roles. The ‘chilling effect’ is when men are reluctant to sponsor or mentor female talent as they are afraid of being inappropriate. As long as men are holding the power, they must share it and look beyond the usual suspects for passing on that power.”

Zimmermann believes that organizations need to take four-pronged approach to tackling this issue.

(Continued on page 2)
Prepare:
- Review policies, including all employees and develop an impartial investigatory process

Prevent:
- Cultivate a zero tolerance policy and be crystal clear about your policies
- Don’t assume everyone knows what you mean by harassment (spell it out)
- Tell it like it is, quickly address sexist jokes or behaviors
- Get to even. Work towards gender parity at all levels so power is shared across gender

Respond:
- Take all accusations seriously. Never treat an accuser with scorn or isolate them
- Protect those accusing from retaliation
- Act promptly

Transform:
- Promote a culture of inclusion, make it safe and build a culture of respect

Grooming for Domestic Abuse: From Romance to Isolation

Psychology Today - February 19, 2019
Lisa Aronson Fontes Ph.D.

Violent and controlling relationships may begin with overwhelming attention, sweet words and gifts that make future victims close their eyes to the red flags indicating potential abuse.

Abusers Often Come on Strong

Intense romance can be a form of grooming, a predatory tactic that is meant to build a deep emotional connection. Abusers know exactly what they are doing.

Sara was just 22 when she met 30-year-old Sam. Within two weeks, he had moved into her apartment, put his name on her bank account and claimed her every second when she was not at work. Sam asked about her most intimate experiences, secrets, and dreams, and accompanied Sara whenever she went out.

At first, Sara was elated—no man had ever loved her this intensely. He put away their phones when they were together so they could concentrate on each other. He pushed her to skip events at work and with friends saying their relationship was their priority. He made exciting alternative plans for the holidays so she missed family gatherings.

Sam asked Sara for access to all her social media accounts as a “sign of trust.” When Sara objected, Sam accused her of lacking commitment and became sullen. He classified all her attempts at privacy or independence as signs that...
#MeToo—Changing Brains, Relationships and Power Dynamics

Psychology Today - Amy Banks - Jan 15, 2018

The #MeToo movement is giving a viral voice to women (and men) who have been the targets of violence and harassment. It is a social change campaign that I never thought would happen in my lifetime. Honestly, when it first started to spread on Facebook I thought it might be cathartic for the people who joined, but I didn’t anticipate it having wider social change potential. My bad—because I temporarily forgot about relational neuroscience and the power that can be unleashed when groups of individuals come together and support one another.

What does the #MeToo movement look like through the lens of relational neuroscience? A few studies come to mind that might help shed some light on interpersonal dynamics across power differences. Check-out "The Cookie Monster Study" as described by Dacher Keltner and his colleagues at University of California at Berkeley.

For those too busy to watch the five-minute video, here is a summary of the study. The researchers brought three individuals to the social science lab and told one of them that they were in charge—essentially giving that person power over the other two. While the group was busy with the assigned task of writing boring university policy, the researchers brought out a plate of four cookies. Initially, each of the three participants ate one cookie each, leaving one on the plate. Interestingly, most of the time, the person given the power eventually ate the fourth cookie. In Dr. Keltner's study taking the fourth cookie correlated with having power and also with a decrease in activity of the mirror neuron system (the circuits in your brain that produce empathy and allow appreciation of the impact of your actions on others). Further, as the researchers watched the behavior of those given power, they observed that the people in charge ate differently. They chewed with their mouths open and occasionally had little pieces of food dropping out of their mouths.

Dr. Keltner describes this change in the level of interpersonal awareness as the "paradox of power"—the qualities that often bring someone to power, like empathy and the ability to listen to others, diminish once a person is in power.

Kelner's research and theory suggests that for many people simply having power over others decreases the activity in the part of the brain needed to understand the impact of your behavior on others. Just the opposite of what is needed to be an engaged, respectful leader.

The potential corrupting and disconnecting impact of power is an enormous problem in Western societies where success is often culturally prescribed as gaining power over others and obtaining more resources than those around you. In the US, the myth of individual success is promoted in business, politics, and sports. This model of capitalism is great for making money but not great at creating cooperative, balanced human beings. In fact, one of the "benefits" of making it to the top of the power hierarchy has been a blissful ability to do whatever you want to whomever you want, and because your empathy pathways may be immobilized by power you don’t have to feel the pain you are causing. Essentially, the abuse of power goes hand in hand with power over others, the dominant organizational model in our country. Because power over environments is everywhere, most people have witnessed power abuse at work or family gatherings, in religious communities and on sports teams. Sexual harassment and abuse has been and continues to be ubiquitous which makes the rather sudden rise of the #MeToo movement all the more stunning.

Another important study focuses on how we connect across difference. When you engage with someone similar to you (it is your perception of similarity that matters, not any real characteristics that are the same or different) the ventral medial prefrontal cortex activates allowing you to use your mirror neuron system to know the other person by internally mimicking their feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. This intuitive or connected knowing allows you to be seen and known in a way that is deeply soothing to your sympathetic nervous system and your stress response.

On the other hand, when you see someone as being different from you, the mirror neuron system is deactivated and the area of the brain that wakes up is the dorsal medial prefrontal cortex – an area associated with abstract thinking. You know a person you deem as “other” through abstract rules rather than intuition. Cultural expectations or biases are part of the abstract information we all use to understand and know someone who is "different" from us. In the case of women who have been harassed or abused, the “othering” of women may well help to turn off a man's intuition and keep him in a cognitive, distorted understanding of women's experience of being treated as the object of his desire and a subordinate to his dominance.

I have heard many pundits questioning why the #MeToo participants are speaking up now after so many years suggesting that it is a sign of political expediency. But that shows little understanding of the real impact these assaults have on people. Victims of sexual abuse or harassment who have been locked in a state of powerlessness without a voice have a malignant process going on in their minds and bodies. A woman may become trapped in the position of powerlessness because she needs the job to take care of a family, or because she is told explicitly that if she tells anyone the people she loves will be hurt. In other situations the shame and blame of the woman's victimization is placed

(Continued on page 6)
SAFE Homes-Rape Crisis Coalition Honors Outstanding Volunteers

SAFE Homes-Rape Crisis Coalition’s staff and clients have all been touched in a unique way by the spirit of our volunteers. It was therefore appropriate to recognize those whose service in 2018 were deemed to be exceptional at our Annual Volunteer Banquet held on March 28, 2019.

**VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR - Claudia Anderson**

This award recognizes the superior achievement, commitment and support of a volunteer to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

**LEADERSHIP AWARD - Steve Ferguson**

This award recognizes outstanding leadership and service to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault by a member of SAFE Homes-Rape Crisis Coalition’s Board of Directors.

**CORPORATE SERVICE AWARD - SPARTA**

This award is presented to a local company in recognition of outstanding corporate support and service to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD OF THE YEAR - The Shop**

This award is presented to individuals and organizations that have exemplified outstanding community service to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

**STUDENT VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR - Wilson Oswald**

This award is presented to outstanding student volunteers in recognition of superior achievement, commitment and support to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

**ANN KEARSE AWARD - Stacy Parker**

Ann Kearse was the kind of volunteer every group wishes they had. Her death in 1998 was a huge loss for us. In honor of her volunteer service, an award was created and is given to the volunteer that epitomizes that ongoing volunteer spirit and commitment in large and small ways.

**DEDICATION AWARDS - Bruster’s, CATO, Ruby Mae’s Attic**

These volunteers have been truly dedicated in their long-term and consistent commitment to SAFE Homes-Rape Crisis Coalition and the victims we serve.

**HELPING HANDS AWARDS - Bobby Jackson, Celanese, Operation Drains of the Upstate, Inc.**

This award is presented to organizations in recognition of exemplary service and dedication to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

**SHINING STAR AWARDS - Natisha Adams, Betty Koester, Little Caesar’s**

This award is presented to individuals and organizations in recognition of stellar support, and commitment to promoting awareness of domestic violence and sexual assault.

**ANGELS OF LIGHT AWARD - Arrowwood Baptist Church, Springs of Grace**

This award is presented to faith-based groups in recognition of their dedication and ongoing commitment to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

**KELLEY AWARD - Once Upon A Child**

Donna Kelley was a much loved friend and staff member. Her death in November of 2002 was an incredible loss for us and the victims she served. In honor of her unparalleled commitment to underserved victim populations, an award was created and given to the volunteer that exemplifies that enthusiasm and dedication to empowering those who would otherwise have no support or guidance.

**OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARDS - American Credit Acceptance, Cracker Barrel, The Kindred Spirits, Milliken, Nita Washington**

This award is presented to individuals and organizations in recognition of their outstanding service to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in this community.
With your continued support, we can help so many...

___ $95 to provide shelter for one night
___ $190 to provide shelter for two nights
___ $475 to provide shelter for five nights
___ $665 to provide shelter for seven nights
___ I wish to make a gift of my own choosing ____________________________

___ I would like my gift to be made in honor/memory of:
   In honor of ________________________________________________________
   In memory of ______________________________________________________
___ I would like more information about volunteer opportunities

Name ______________________________________________________________________
Address ____________________________________________________________________
City ___________________________ State ____________ Zip __________
Phone ( ______ ) _____________________ Email ______________________________

Please make checks payable to SAFE Homes-Rape Crisis Coalition
Mail to: 236 Union Street, Spartanburg, SC  29302

Donations are tax deductible according to the tax regulations regarding 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations.
Thank You to our 2018 Contributors

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SAFE Homes-Rape Crisis Coalition receives generous support from many people through United Way designated donations. Some of these donors did not wish to have their donations made public; therefore, may not be included on this list. We are appreciative of the support of our community and regret the omission of any contributor not listed in this report.
Join us for the exciting 3rd Annual 1 Voice Hub City concert finale! Singer/songwriters from across the Upstate entered this year's competition by submitting an original song based on this year's theme: Overcoming Adversity.

Now, the six finalists perform live, and YOU get to vote to select the winner. Presented by AFL, the concert finale will be held April 18th at 7 pm at Wild Wing Cafe in Spartanburg.

2018 STATISTICS
SAFÉ Homes-Rape Crisis Coalition:
Assisted 3,867 adults and 1,959 children traumatized by domestic violence and sheltered 379 adults and children

- Assisted 286 direct and 149 indirect victims of sexual assault
- Provided 3,863 individual and 1,353 family therapy sessions for 620 people
- Provided 277 therapy/support groups which were attended by 277 individuals
- Accompanied 92 victims of sexual assault to the hospital
- Assisted 388 victims with filing order of protection petitions and attended 1,762 hearings with domestic violence and sexual assault victims
- We provided 481 education/prevention programs reaching 113,140 individuals
- 2,933 volunteers contributed 26,851.75 hours this year

THE SHOP, a local non-profit group of motorcycle enthusiasts, have volunteered their time to collect toys and gifts for victims for over 20 years. Even though they were unable to have the bike run due to weather, The Shop & all those wonderful folks who usually ride donated a truckload of toys, bikes, gifts and raised $7,040.00. Thank you to all who supported SHRCC!

April is Child Abuse Prevention and Sexual Assault Awareness month. SAFE Homes-Rape Crisis Coalition, in partnership with the United Way of the Piedmont, Hope Center for Children, Children’s Advocacy Center, and NewSpring Church, will host a Lunch-n-Learn on April 8, 2019 starting at 11:30 a.m. at the Spartanburg County Public Library (Headquarters) to help raise community awareness about preventing these issues. Free and open to the public, the event will feature a discussion panel to raise awareness and to highlight each organizations preventative efforts, statistics, survivor testimonies, as well as tips and resources from community agency professionals.

Lunch will be provided :)
directly on her shoulders – because she let herself want the job, or let herself be in the same room with the perpetrator, or because she dressed in such a way, or walked in such a way or talked in such a way as to ask for this mistreatment. These stories are very old and very deep in the female psyche.

For some, the abuse releases a cascade of chemical reactions in their bodies and brains that results in chronic PTSD. Just as a war veteran cannot escape the horrors of war, many women cannot escape the horrors of their abuse and harassment. Neuroimaging studies of people with PTSD tell us a few important things that might help us understand the 'why did it take so long'. The human brain is designed with balance. The thinking or cognitive part of the brain (the prefrontal cortex) sends lots of inhibitory pathways to the feeling part of the brain (the amygdala). When a person has PTSD and is replaying episodes of violence over and over again, her amygdala is red hot with fear so her day-to-day life is dominated by terror. On top of this, the area of the brain that would allow a person with PTSD to be able to inhibit this wild fear (the prefrontal cortex) is less active. It is as if the brain has determined that being hyper vigilant to the next injury or attack trumps everything (pun intended). And finally, one study looking at the area of the brain that forms words (Broca’s area) found that when a person is acutely triggered, there is less blood flow and less ability to speak – literally. Taken together, these studies shift the question to "how in the world are so many women speaking out about harassment and abuse for the first time"?

That question, I believe, is best explained by the power of connection. In a classic experiment on “why it hurts to be left out” Eisenberger and Lieberman explored what happens in the brains of people being socially excluded. The experiment was rather simple. People enter a lab where they are connected to a functional imaging machine and instructed to play computer ball toss with a couple other people. Over time, that person is left out of the game. Now, admittedly, this is not a major social exclusion—it is not racism or homophobia, it is not objectification of another because of sex, class or any other defining characteristic. But, surprisingly, the researchers found that most people being left out “felt bad” and the worse they felt by the social exclusion the more the dorsal anterior cingulate cortex fired. This area of the brain is the exact same area of the brain that is activated by the distress of physical pain. This point is crucial—human beings operate best when they are in safe communities of connection and it is so important that the alarm system for being left out is the exact same alarm system for being sick or injured. When another human being is abused, objectified, shamed and told that they are the reason for all of it, they are essentially pushed out of human experience—they are socially excluded and they are in pain. Real, live, deep and dark pain. Usually, that pain is not seen or acknowledged by the person causing it and often overlooked by those around them.

The #MeToo movement, which broke the cycle of painful isolation, started when a well-known white actress challenged women to simply name their experience on Facebook by typing #MeToo. One by one, women added their voice to the movement. I imagine that each person who has become a part of this group is feeling a concrete lessening of their isolation and powerlessness, a soothing of the pain pathways and maybe, for the first time a lessening of the burden they have carried-alone.

But for some, the movement has been more isolating. One critique of #MeToo is that it is not capturing the real pain of women of color - ironic but not surprising. Ironic because the movement started eleven years ago by Tarana Burke who was trying to amplify the voices of young women of color who had been sexually exploited and abused. Not surprising given the studies that show the pain that people of color experience is often underrated and underappreciated by white, dominant group members. There is a danger of intensifying these painful dynamics if the original voices of women of color get drowned out or disappeared by the larger cultural narrative. The #MeToo movement will only be successful when it amplifies all voices.

My mentor and colleague, Jean Baker Miller offered a compelling redefinition of power. Relational power, as she called it, was “the capacity to produce change...to facilitate movement...to induce responsiveness. To move and be moved by another”. #MeToo is relational power in action and it is helping our culture redefine the structures of power. It is no longer ok to use others for your own power or sexual gratification. I am not naïve. I do not think the #MeToo movement will shift all power dynamics but I am impressed by the uniformity of responses I have heard from friends and colleagues. Just the other night I had a conversation with a female friend, a doctor and head of a prestigious medical department in Boston. A woman with visible power. She reacted to the ongoing revelations about sexual abuse and harassment the way almost every woman I talk with does, “#MeToo—duh!” Her statement captured what most women know—being exposed to these grotesque displays of power dominance is a regular part of being female in the world—at least in any world I have been apart of and I don’t expect it to stop because a number of highly powerful men have been outed for abusive, boorish and at times criminal behavior. However, I do feel confident that there is no shoving this reality back in the closet. This new movement has allowed women to find their voices and to reclaim their dignity. In doing so they have shed shame, blame and pain simply by joining a group of women and men speaking out against the abuse of power. I am honored to be a part the movement. #MeToo!
she did not love him. Sara gave in—it was easier than fighting—and she desperately wanted to preserve the “purity” of their love. Sam had groomed Sara into isolation, and isolation made her vulnerable to further coercive control.

**Intimidation Is Next**

Romantic gestures can abruptly turn into intimidation. Abusers typically blame their partners for growing tensions. Victims will work hard to appease the abuser, trying to keep themselves safe and get back to the early glow.

After a romantic dinner one evening, Steve began kissing and taking off the clothes of his boyfriend, Derek. Derek kissed him back but said he did not want to have sex. Steve grabbed him hard by both arms, and stared into his face, threateningly. For the first time, Derek felt afraid of Steve, who was bigger and stronger than he was. In that moment, Derek understood that saying “no” to sex was not really an option.

To keep the peace, Derek never again directly refused to do what Steve asked of him sexually. Derek felt intimidated throughout the remainder of their relationship but tried to avoid thinking about it.

From initially making their partners feel loved unconditionally and like they can do no wrong, abusers then make their partners work hard to please them, blaming and acting hostile when they do not get their way.

**Grooming the Community**

Abusers often groom friends, family, and others to overlook signs of abuse and cut ties with the victim. They strategically act charming and helpful so people cannot imagine the cruel acts occurring behind closed doors.

Iris described how Dave would mow their neighbors’ lawns, play the organ at church, and coach children’s sports teams. No one believed Iris when she first tried to describe how he treated her and the children when they were home alone.

Sometimes abusers groom the community by ruining their partner’s reputation. This can be overt or quite subtle.

Leticia said she lost her friends soon after getting together with her husband, “because of the stories he made up or twisted to make me sound incompetent, lazy, and crazy.”

Mike called Lisa’s friends and asked them to let him know if she did anything peculiar, subtly indicating that he was worried that she was becoming “unhinged.” She noticed certain friends looking at her strangely, but did not know why. The unexplained change in her friends’ behavior estranged her from them.

Jacob told members of their tight-knit religious community that Hannah was behaving immodestly and neglecting their children. When she tried to leave him, her community shunned her and fought on behalf of her husband’s bid for child custody.

Awareness of the grooming process helps us understand the plight of someone in a relationship with an abuser. Grooming helps explain why people may stay with abusers, submit to their demands, and push away others who try to help. Cassandra Wiener, a coercive control researcher, entreats readers to understand how this grooming process can break down survivors. She explains that survivors of domestic violence and coercive control “are vulnerable, but not because they are weak, character-deficient or mentally unwell. They are vulnerable because they have been groomed (Wiener, 2017).”
UPCOMING EVENTS

April 2019  
Sexual Assault Awareness Month  
National Child Abuse Prevention Month

April 7-13, 2019  
National Crime Victims' Rights Week  

April 8, 2019  
Partners In Prevention Lunch-n-Learn  
Spartanburg Library Headquarters @ 11:30 am

April 18, 2019  
1VoiceHubCity  
Singer/Songwriter Competition Concert Finale  
Wild Wing Café ~ Spartanburg @ 7:00 pm  
www.1voicehubcity.com

April 25, 2019  
National Denim Day/Wear Jeans with a Purpose

October 2019  
Domestic Violence Awareness Month  
National Bullying Prevention Month

October 2019  
Putting the Pieces Together:  
An Interpersonal Violence Conference  
Date/Time Not Finalized at Time of Printing

October 23, 2019  
Unity Day 2019. Unite against bullying-  
Wear and Share Orange! (www.pacer.org)

SAFE Homes-Rape Crisis Coalition (SHRCC) provides services to victims of domestic violence in Spartanburg, Cherokee and Union Counties and victims of sexual assault in Spartanburg and Cherokee Counties.

SAFE Homes-Rape Crisis Coalition Mission

The mission of SAFE Homes-Rape Crisis Coalition is to use our collective voice to address the impact of domestic and sexual violence by providing quality services to those affected and to create social change through education, training, and activism.

VISION:

We envision a community liberated from all forms of domestic violence and sexual assault.