

## Fall 2007 WST 200 Students: current and future women's issues

**Note:** Given ten minutes to list women's issues they see as important in the lives of women today, this remarkable group of students came up with the following issues, giving us some sense of the concerns and awareness of our Women's Studies students—and the changes they see as necessary in our society.

- Maintenance of reproductive freedom and furthering awareness of how it affects our standing as women.
- Equality in the media: women in positions which can influence how women are represented in the media.
- Equality in politics: changing the gender ratios among those who govern us to reflect the ratio of men to women in society.
- Addressing gender roles in certain jobs.
- Addressing the 'secretary syndrome' among men (tendency of males to expect women to wait on them, serve them, etc.).
- Health issues: breast cancer, heart disease, abortion and pregnancy.
- Access to sexual education (in many schools, girls are taught abstinence, while boys are taught preventative measures).
- Sexual harassment: enforcement of policies.
- Getting child support, including support for single mothers seeking education.
- Equality of insurance coverage (birth control vs. Viagra).
- People respecting the voices of women vs. the voice of men (the tendency of people of both sexes to engage males in discussion while ignoring or overriding women's voices).
- Problem of the "boys' club"; hierarchies of power excluding women, and the problem of successful women being disrespectfully stereotyped.
- Consumerism promoting /promoted by vanity and objectification of women.
- Equity: pay for traditionally female jobs.
- International human rights abuses (esp. female workers) that make products here cheaper.
- Sexual assault & domestic violence: education and enforcement.
- Women as spiritual leaders: glass ceiling issues in many religious institutions.
- Feminization of poverty & changing standard of poverty.
- Equal pay for equal work.
- Body image and identity: effect on women of all ages.
- Stereotypes by which women are downgraded and disrespected.
- Gender division (problem of stereotypes in how children are raised).
- Violence against women of color.
- Cultural diversity and oppression: building bridges between women of varying backgrounds, and providing cultural and social access to all.
- Lesbian and bi-sexual issues: the problem of exclusion.
- Sex crimes receiving lesser sentences than other types of crime which are less severe.

