

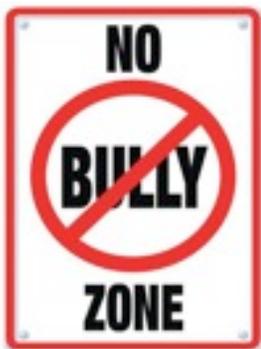
Composition Weekly



February 6, 2012

Contrapower Harassment within *The Narcissism Epidemic*

Dr. Claudia Lampman, a UAA psychology professor, put on a workshop Monday where she discussed contrapower harassment in the classroom. The results she shared were surprisingly high: the American Psychological Association surveyed 4,735 teachers and found that 37% had received an obscene/sexual remark from a student, 27% had been verbally threatened by a student, 25% had property damaged by a student, 19% had been intimidated by a student, and 15% had been physically attacked by a student in the past year. It is believed that student entitlement may be the cause to this aggressive behavior.



In their book *The Narcissism Epidemic: Living in the Age of Entitlement*, authors Jean M. Twenge and W. Keith Campbell explore the spread of narcissism in the United States and how the false feeling of superiority is “corroding” it. Although only briefly mentioned in

Lampman’s discussion, this book helps illustrate why certain inappropriate behaviors are on the rise in the classroom - that is, due to student self-entitlement. Receiving a college degree has become the norm, so most young people these days expect to get a bachelor’s degree regardless of their GPA, work ethic, goals, etc.

Lampman found that students who are unrealistically optimistic about their future goals often take their anxiety out on their teachers. While not too surprising, Lampman did find that students view women, minorities, and faculty with less experience, no PhD, lower rank, no tenure, or adjuncts as having lower status. Because of this, these tend to be the teachers who face contrapower harassment most often in the classroom.

Lampman’s statistics show that different forms of contrapower harassment is usually based on the gender of the teacher; while female teachers encounter more aggression from students, male teachers are more often the target of sexual advances. Both aggression and also sexual advances come in varying degrees, ranging from “harmless” flirting and having cell phones out/talking in class to overt sexual advances and making threats or attacking a teacher.

With 650 faculty at UAF, Lampman projects: 9 faculty will receive death threats, 2-3 will be



threatened with physical harm, 2-3 will be attacked, 14 will have property damaged, 29 will be offered a bribe, 8 will be stalked, and 1 will be threatened with a weapon.

By spreading this information, Lampman does not mean to alarm teachers, but to bring about awareness to this issue. If teachers are having difficulties with their students, the Dean of Students, Don Foley, should be contacted.