

# VIEWPOINT

## The silent epidemic



**ANNETTE SEMERDJIAN**

One in three teenagers will have an abusive relationship, and more than two-thirds of them will never report it. Barrie Levy, author and lecturer from UCLA School of Public Policy & Social Research, has devoted her lectures and books to addressing this issue.

I went to one of her seminars for her book "In Love and in Danger" that was held a few weeks ago at the Glendale Public Library. Levy, along with the Glendale Commission on the Status of Women, showed a presentation that included a documentary based on her book. Unfortunately there were no announcements or even a simple notice about this seminar to Glendale High School students.

Not everyone is a feminist like me – again, very unfortunate – therefore people are not aware of helpful presentations like this. Levy believes that teens especially should be able to access as much information about abuse as possible. Although Levy remarks that there is "not one answer for everybody," what's important is having information available so victims don't feel helpless.

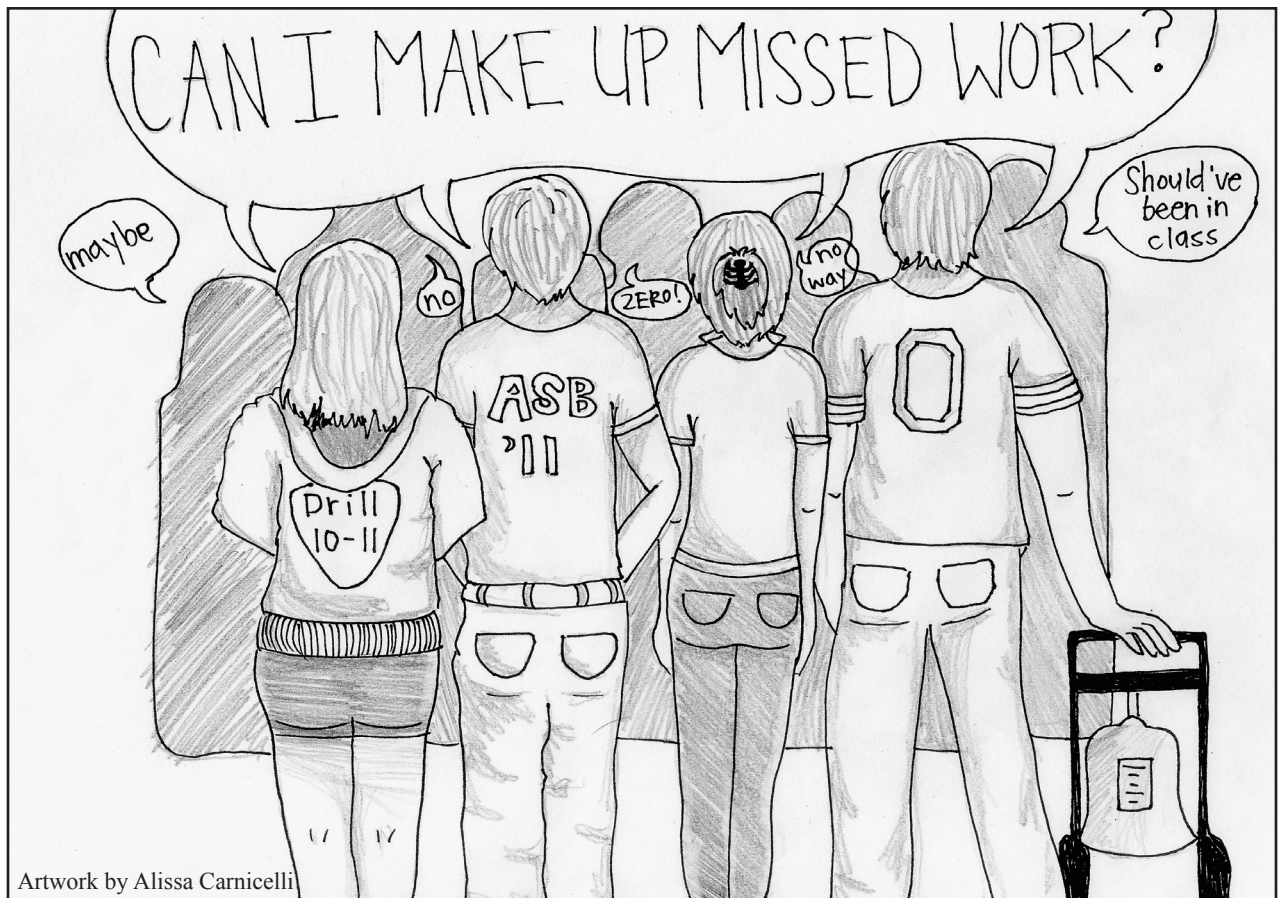
As a teenager it's risky enough to even have a boyfriend, so when put into an abusive situation they feel trapped. The most important thing is to contact an adult you can trust. Most teens hesitate to do this because they don't want their parents to find out, so it takes both the parents and teens to work together.

Levy also provides information for parents as well who may have a daughter in an abusive relationship. As an adult or peer, seeing warning signs is crucial. If he has an explosive temper, gives constant put downs, isolates her from family and friends, has big mood swings, and is possessive, know that these are common signs of an abusive relationship. Levy adds that the "important thing is not to keep it a secret." There are inequalities amongst women and men in society and Levy does "everything possible to change that." For instance, there is a social system that believes women should be supported by men. It's also accepted for men to use aggressive behavior, it's praised actually. There is, as Levy puts it, a "diminished social status for a woman who's not with a man." Even in school young people break up and the girl becomes less popular, like in movies when the cheerleader dates the football player, it's the unwritten social code.

If you experience any of this please do not hesitate to contact someone immediately. There is so much help out there for victims of domestic violence, especially teenagers, don't think because it's not advertised in school you are alone. Programs such as Break the Cycle empower youth to end domestic violence. Most teens that experience domestic violence drop out of school, have risky sexual behavior, and are suicidal. Instead of letting it get to that point go to websites like [www.breakthecycle.com](http://www.breakthecycle.com) and [www.thesafeplace.com](http://www.thesafeplace.com). Also be aware that everyone can go on Beeline buses because they are now all Safe Places, you can go anywhere with the Safe Place sign up at any time you feel in danger. Everyone deserves to be safe and healthy.

Annette Semerdjian is the Features Editor of *Explosion*

STAFF EDITORIAL



Artwork by Alissa Carnicelli

It's the same old story: you work hard in school and participate in a bunch of extracurricular activities, and you find that you are so overbooked that you don't have time to finish your homework. You have ASB, football, drama, music, cheer and many other extracurricular activities, and you find it takes up so much time that it is hard to manage it.

These activities take up hours after school and they even take up valuable class time occasionally during the school day for certain events. You ask your teacher to make up tests or have an extension on class assignments or homework, and most are cooperative but there are a few who seem to say the same thing: "No!"

We have learned that in several cases, the same teachers who told one student he or she could not make up an assignment just gave an extension to someone else who was in a certain school club, activity or sport.

Every single extracurricular activity, whether it is a drama musical or a football game, should be treated equally. There should not be any preferences because, after all,

they create the same problem with students having to miss class. ASB students put in a lot of hard work in what they do and setting up for those rallies has them here until 10 or 11 p.m.

It is understandable that some of their members may have trouble getting their work done when they are at school for more than 12 hours. They deserve the leniency to be able to make up what they don't have the time to do.

Each and every student that takes part in an extracurricular activity, regardless of the activity, should be able to have the opportunity to make up the work they miss out on.

Indeed, it seems as if well-rounded students are being punished for simply being involved.

We originally thought that high-achieving students with several extracurricular activities were endorsed by any teacher.

Students join these activities to get involved and better their chances of having a successful future, but without the help of all teachers it is difficult to balance both school work and extracurricular activities.

**"It seems as if well-rounded students are being punished for simply being involved."**

## GLENDALE HIGH SCHOOL EXPLOSION

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*Explosion* is published seven times during the school year by the production journalism staff of Glendale High School, 1440 East Broadway, Glendale, California 91205, (818) 242-3161, ext. 6110, Fax- (818) 244-6309, under the auspices of the Glendale Unified School District. *Explosion* is printed at News Publishers' Press, Glendale, California and is in its 95th year of publication. Advertising rates are \$6 per column inch.

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