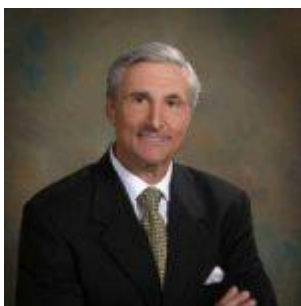


ME TOO FORUM



Dr. Jill McCracken



Dennis deVlaming



Dr. David Liebert

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MORE SEX EDUCATION URGED AT METOO FORUM

By DAVID KLEMENT

Comprehensive sex education starting at an early age is one way to curtail sexual harassment for future generations. That was one of the few points of consensus that emerged from a lively discussion of the MeToo movement at the Institute's March Dinner series program titled [*#MeToo and Men: The Case for Due Process*](#).

Dr. Jill McCracken, Associate Professor at USF St. Petersburg, said MeToo will have succeeded if its momentum leads to age-appropriate sex education that prepares young people to know and respect boundaries and understand the meaning of consent.

The MeToo movement, she said, "is an extension of the fight for gender equality, for bodily autonomy, subjectivity and choice." After reviewing the history of the movement, she cited statistics on the rate of sexual assaults: One out of four girls and one out of four boys become victims by age 18, she said.

The MeToo movement "is a backlash against the status quo of men having power over women," she said. "It creates a space for rage, discomfort and loss from which healing can begin."

Arguing for due process, defense attorney Denis deVlaming said it is imperative that any charges of sexual misconduct be provably true, not just an accusation. "The greatest crime in the world is a failure of justice," he said. "And justice in our system is a provable justice." He questioned Dr. McCracken's assertion that the rate of false sexual accusations is less than 2 percent, and cited a case in which an accuser ultimately admitted she faked an attempted rape to make her boyfriend jealous.

“If there’s evidence, DNA, witnesses, bring it on,” he said. “But how can there be a conviction without hard evidence?”

Dr. David Leibert, an SPC professor of Social and Behavioral Science, talked about unintended consequences of the MeToo movement. Since it went viral in 2017, 50 percent of men say they are reluctant to work with women, he said. Students are experiencing fewer opportunities for consensual romantic relationships. And the millennial generation is overcautious, fearful, and easily offended by any mention of sexual conduct.

To view a video recording of the forum, go to [#MeToo and Men](#).

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